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New England Journal of Public Policy

A Journal of the
John W McCormack
Institute of Public Affairs

University of Massachusetts
at Boston

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Editor's Note

Padraig O'Malley

I was struck by the absence of attention to questions relating to race, poverty, the housing crisis, and homelessness in the course of the weird, sometimes bizarre, and too often rancorous presidential campaign we have now, mercifully, put behind us. We know for sure that none of these issues was on George Herbert Walker Bush's agenda — the last four years have been an impressive expression of his distaste for such *trivial* concerns — no foreign policy nuances, no histories in the making, no late-night calls to world leaders, no articulation of New World Orders — although the latter seems to have eluded his grasp somewhere between enunciation and elucidation, not an unusual by-product of slipshod sloganeering, one more casualty of his difficulty with “the vision thing.”

We know that none of these issues crossed the lips of H. Ross Perot as he dithered hither and thither preaching the doctrine of puritanical economic housekeeping with the evangelical absolutism that only a billionaire three times over could alchemize. And we know that Bill Clinton eschewed these issues, too — perhaps in his efforts to endear himself to those elusive Reagan Democrats; perhaps not to be seen as the “tax and spend liberal Democrat,” the belittling epithet with which George Bush wanted so desperately to damn him; perhaps because a sensitivity to social issues was somehow unmasculine in this most decidedly macho presidential year; perhaps because drawing attention to the problems of the poor, the damaged, and the disadvantaged was to portray oneself as being “soft,” with wanting to do things for “them” — and we all know the code, to whom the “them” refers. God forbid we should have heard the word *race* in this year of the Los Angeles riots and the violent convulsions in our inner cities. What we did hear, however, is that there are no votes in championing the poor, the dispossessed, and those living on the margin. The rural and urban underclasses that are spreading like some invisible miasma across our country are condemned not to being forgotten but to something worse — to being ignored.

There was, of course, no public outcry because these issues were not addressed, even as they have become more acute. Our attention span is short. These are old issues. They have had their “fifteen minutes” of air time. Andy Warhol would approve.

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Los Angeles is a dim memory, long displaced by the electronic images of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Andrew. Our capacity to assimilate devastation is unlimited but, unfortunately, short-lived.

Four years ago, in the 1988 Summer/Fall issue of the *New England Journal of Public Policy*, we wrote,

[The two] presidential candidates, Michael Dukakis and George Bush, [proved] themselves extraordinarily adept time and again at not addressing any of the excruciatingly difficult choices a new administration will have to make. But the realities the new president will face cannot be indefinitely obscured. The prosperity we enjoy, the unparalleled splurge in consumption during the 1980s, has been fueled by borrowing against the future. Although this observation is not especially new — and repetition has robbed it of urgency — what we have yet to adequately grasp, that is, grasp to the point where the knowledge impels action, is the enormous cost of our excesses. The inescapable reality that that cost must now be met limits severely the choices open to us and has unsettling implications for the kind of society we may bequeath our children. We called the tune, danced with abandon to its seductive rhythms; now we must pay the piper.

But we have not paid the piper and, frankly, do not yet appear to be up to the challenge. The aspiration expresses itself a little more frequently perhaps, but the commitment is as weak and self-centered and shallow as ever.

Hence to this issue of the *New England Journal of Public Policy*. Public policy at the microlevel. None of the visionless clichés that pass for eloquent public discourse. But policy issues with intricate, complex dimensions, not amenable to easy remedy, posing alternative choices within shifting and sometimes treacherous parameters, especially when the underlying values are not so clear — issues, in short, that offer in their own *parochial* way a microcosm of the national landscape, the local tentacles of the many-headed monsters the new administration will have to face up to, especially when it comes down to having to make choices between outcomes and process.

Richard Hogarty, in the third of a series of articles on university presidential searches, highlights the conflict between trustees and faculty as one that often centers on the question of “process” versus “product.” The trustees of the University of Massachusetts were more than pleased with themselves for having made what, in their view, was an impressive choice for president, while many faculty were angered over what they considered to be a terrible process. Each side, in short, was dismayed at the other’s behavior.

“For more than twenty years,” Hogarty writes, “the trustees and faculty at UMass had fought over the question of power in presidential searches.” However, on this occasion the UMass board of trustees and its appointed search committee broke with past university governance policies and did something different. When they finished reviewing candidates, they had eliminated all but Michael K. Hooker, because they decided that he had the necessary competence, vision, and stature for the job. But in doing so, they breached what was crucial to many faculty: the principle of participatory democracy. Hogarty declares,

It is helpful to analyze the recent controversy in the framework of the community power debate, which contrasts the “power elite” approach to the study of power with the alternative “pluralist” explanation. Those who take the elitist approach

argue that there is a relatively permanent “top leadership” which decides the important questions, while the pluralists argue that any significant group in society has the capacity to win redress of its grievances if the group feels intensely about its problems and demands action.

Echoes of national administrations coming together or falling apart!

Douglas Reynolds explores some of the tensions and hopes associated with the creation of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and the release of a master plan for cultural and physical-resource development that calls for new standards for private, local, state, and federal partnerships. Actions by the Corridor’s partners (the Corridor covers the length of the forty-six miles of Blackstone Valley running south from Worcester, Massachusetts, to Providence, Rhode Island) are shaped by both past and contemporary economic development issues. From 1920 to the present, textiles and related industries in the valley have suffered more bad years than good. The Corridor Commission is charged with the responsibility of finding and implementing strategies that socially and economically will enhance the Blackstone Valley’s material future by protecting its past. The multiple partnerships, Reynolds argues, between the federal government, two states (Massachusetts and Rhode Island), a score of communities, and a wide variety of interest groups mark a turning point in the evolution of public policy planning.

Perhaps most provocative is Reynolds’s proposition that

if we are to believe, for example, in industrialization as a transforming force worthy of the title “revolutionary,” we must also look at deindustrialization as a transforming force that holds revolutionary potential in undermining or making socially useful the jobs which industrial workers, their communities, their work cultures, and their children will come to find in deindustrializing areas, and in realigning the two-class society so increasingly clear in the valley today.

The Corridor Commission seeks the greatest possible impact from its projects, including “good jobs at good wages,” because it wants to serve as a model both for good development and for imaginative planning.

Historic preservation issues, embraced by both sides of the development battle, are seen as a cutting edge technique for both economic and cultural development — the legacy of deindustrialization is touted as “the valley’s special character.” In Reynolds’s view, the Corridor, therefore, represents an interdisciplinary ground floor and the fulcrum of several primary policy shifts, which will grow in the 1990s.

Reynolds states,

If public and private groups can take responsibility for our past . . . they must also be able to shape the future. This Janus-faced ideology bespeaks something that members of long-existing cultures have known for some time: history itself can produce a cultural legacy worthy of building upon. Such pride in place also takes the survivalist’s refuge in familiar territory, defensively hoping that history, and our buildings, can be turned against what in more pessimistic moments is seen as the mortality of our society.

At its best, Reynolds’s article offers us a paradigm of the consensual balancing of process and outcome that emphasizes cooperation, interdisciplinary planning,

and imagination; it is a paradigm that could be replicated successfully in other parts of the country that have been enduring the human and economic ravages of deindustrialization.

Ralph Rivera addresses questions of demographics, diversity, and equity in his analysis of the Latino community in Massachusetts. He argues that Massachusetts has undergone radical changes in its racial/ethnic composition in the past ten years. The Latino population, because of its extraordinary growth rate during the last two decades, is the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the state. Yet relatively little is known about this population owing to what Rivera calls the information gap, which he defines as the lack of basic information and analysis of the problems and needs of this population.

He contends that recognition of Latinos as a significant population which warrants attention in Massachusetts has come very slowly, even though the size and phenomenal growth of the Latino community has increasingly been the subject of discussion in the media and the business community throughout the United States. "Unlike blacks, who are concentrated in Boston . . . Latinos are dispersed geographically throughout the state. Their geographic distribution, combined with their limited economic and political power, have made Latinos victims of indifference and neglect in the commonwealth."

Rivera writes that "the new diversity has rekindled the historic tension between assimilation and pluralism as seen by the various English-only legislative initiatives." However, Rivera suggests that "instead of seeking the mythical 'melting pot,' the general public policy thrust should focus on facilitating acculturation and integration in ways that preserve ethnic identity, language, and cultural expressions."

The public educational system, Rivera maintains, has failed to respond to the needs of the Latino community.

This is particularly critical in inner-city schools where Latinos constitute a large percentage of the student population and in some cases make up the majority of students (for example, Lawrence, Holyoke, and Chelsea). Yet, because of the declining enrollment of white children in the public schools, fewer resources are being allocated to education; subsequently, cities tend to have very limited resources to support essential programs.

"It will be extremely difficult," Rivera concludes, "for Massachusetts to have an economically competitive economy without an economically competitive Latino work force. Consequently, policymakers must seek ways to assure full participation in the state's economy for this population."

Arthur Woolf focuses on the cost of home ownership in Vermont in the years 1975 to 1990. He defines the cost of home ownership as "the percentage of family income needed to finance an average-price home. Although prices skyrocketed during the 1980s, the actual cost of home ownership as a percentage of income was about 15 percent greater in 1990 than it was during the mid-1970s." His analysis indicates that price increases will moderate during the 1990s because of slower economic growth and changing demographic forces and that the cost of home ownership will continue to decline from the peak reached in 1988.

One of the major factors influencing the price of housing in Vermont is the increased demand caused by the changing demographics of the state. Woolf examines

Vermont's population statistics to show the magnitude of such influences on housing prices. The tremendous increase in the number of twenty-five- to thirty-four-year-olds, who place the highest demand on housing, puts a strain on the state's housing sector. "This helps to explain three interconnected events in the 1980s: lower overall state population growth than in the 1970s, a greater number of houses constructed in the 1980s as compared to the 1970s, and a rapid escalation of housing prices in the decade of the 1980s."

Vermont's surge in economic growth during the mid and late 1980s put additional demands on the state housing stock. The state's income growth in this period was one of the strongest in the nation . . . The growth came partly from higher wages and partly from an increasing number of dual-income households, both of which put upward pressure on the price of Vermont housing as higher incomes allowed buyers to purchase bigger, better, and more expensive homes.

Demographic changes, Woolf shows, will work to moderate future housing-price trends in the state as the number of Vermonters in their prime home-buying years declines.

Paul Levy and Michael Connor address the economic, social, physical, and engineering constraints that have to be taken into account in cleaning up Boston Harbor. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) was created in 1985 to undertake a massive public works program, including construction of a 1.3 billion-gallon-per-day sewage treatment plant and a sludge fertilizer processing plant, to end the decades-old practice of dumping sewage wastes into the ocean. The program will also cause water and sewer charges to rise dramatically during a fifteen-year period.

The project has raised a host of environmental and public policy issues: How should sludge by-products be disposed of or used by society? What is the proper placement of the effluent outfall for a sewage treatment plant of this magnitude discharging into Massachusetts Bay? What is the appropriate level of treatment to apply to wastewater? How can ratepayers be assured that their money is being spent on the highest environmental priorities?

Levy and Connor explain how the harbor became so polluted, describe the current cleanup program, analyze some of the most important issues that must be resolved in the course of that program, and discuss the benefits of the different cleanup elements to the environmental health of Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay.

The MWRA, [they conclude], has made significant progress and remained on schedule. The project has already resulted in a cleaner harbor. MWRA spent more on capital improvements in its first four years of existence than the [Metropolitan District Commission] was permitted to spend in the previous twenty years. A number of "immediate upgrade" projects required to improve the interim performance of the treatment plant have been completed. These projects have already decreased the amount of grit and scum discharged to the harbor by four thousand gallons per day and reduced the discharge of coliform bacteria to the harbor. . . . In addition, the increased pumping capacity at Deer Island has reduced the number and amount of [combined sewer overflow] discharges dramatically, so that area beaches are the cleanest they have been since measurements began in the 1930s. But the largest improvement to the harbor occurred when sludge dumping

ended in late 1991. A later improvement will occur in 1995 with the completion of the outfall and the first phase of plant construction.

Because federal and state cost-sharing will contribute only a small percentage of the total costs, most of the costs of the Boston Harbor cleanup will be borne by the ratepayers, who have seen their average water and sewer bills rise by almost 300 percent since 1985. Further large increases are expected to be levied in succeeding years. Given these projected rates and the constraints of borrowing money in the capital markets, Levy and Connor repeatedly emphasize that the MWRA will need to carefully weigh the expected benefits of various aspects of the cleanup program to give the highest priority to investments that yield the greatest water quality improvements.

Finally, Shaun O'Connell, in his reflective and gracefully written essay on New York, captures the contradictions and promises of the American dream: the city as the metaphorical symbol of what has gone wrong in America and how our unwillingness to acknowledge our failure to address the humongous challenges that failure represents diminishes us and our civic culture. O'Connell observes,

We know that our cities have arrived at the point of the maximum diffusion of power and fragmentation of culture, a dissolving center of centrifugal forces that results in chaos and entropy. There, indeed, is where the issues and seemingly irresolvable problems of civilization are focused; there, too, are acted out the dramas of a fully differentiated and self-conscious society now in disarray and decay.

And thus to why the men-who-would-be-president abandoned the cities: "The white middle class has fled the cities for the rings of surrounding suburban towns: there an affluent population increasingly defines the national political agenda."

"The United States is a nation of suburbs," declares William Schneider in *The Atlantic Monthly*. "If the suburbs, which hold the majority of voters, have come to represent the center of what it means to be an American," O'Connell tells us, "then the cities, along with their poor and minority citizens who vote in decreasing numbers, have become marginalized and minimalized in the American mind."

"The hatred of cities is the fear of freedom," writes Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*. "The fear is contagious, and as larger numbers of people come to perceive the city as a barren waste, the more profitable their disillusion becomes to dealers in guns and to political factions that would destroy not only New York and Chicago but also the idea of the city."

And with the death of the *idea* of the city we will lose an integral part of our identity, of our conceptions of self and of self and society.

But who is listening?

America and its communities are changing with unsettling rapidity. Much of this change has been healthy and many of the problems it has caused tend to evoke their own solutions. This country — despite its transitional strains and its freely voiced complaints — has an immense capacity for self-correction.

But for an increasing number of the people living in American cities change has meant deterioration, continued unemployment, and growing alienation from

the rest of society. No process of self-correction promises to rebuild our cities and reunite our urban population; our present problems promise only to become worse.


We believe that some problems of American cities are of such transcending importance as to command an urgent response on a national scale. We also believe that the next five years must be used to develop the capacity to alter present trends of urban development. For we are building toward a confrontation between Negro and white, between the mainstream and the disaffected, and between the affluent and the poor — a confrontation whose symptoms already are apparent in the sporadic and ominous violence which flares up across the Nation in our urban centers both large and small.

We foresee a time when this militancy will engage a larger share of central city populations. Their demands for employment opportunities, compensatory education, and other services are increasing, while the economy of the city and its ability to respond are in decline.

Only the President of the United States can lead the national effort which is required to change this pattern. And, he will need strong and committed allies and new and flexible instruments of policy. We are convinced that the President must forge a grand national coalition to direct the Nation's resources at its city problems.

Thus, the Task Force believes that the first priorities for public action in urban America are related to the growing disparity between city and suburb — a disparity which is expressed in the segregation between white and Negro, the gap between income in central city and in suburb, and the uneven economic growth in metropolitan areas.

(These paragraphs, written by the late Dr. Paul Ylvisaker, chairman of President Lyndon Johnson's 1967 Task Force on the Cities, appear in the introduction to the task force report.)

But who was listening? 

UMass Selects a New President

Elements of a Search Strategy

Richard A. Hogarty

The selection of a new university president, an event of major importance in academic life, is usually filled with tensions on the part of those concerned about its outcome. The 1992 presidential search at the University of Massachusetts exemplifies such tensions. There were mixed reactions to the overall performance. When they finished reviewing candidates, the search committee had eliminated all but Michael K. Hooker, who, they deemed, has the necessary competence, vision, and stature for the task. The main conflict centered on the question of "process" versus "product." The trustees rejoiced in what they considered an impressive choice, while many faculty were angered over what they considered a terrible process. Each side was dismayed at the other's behavior. This study focuses on the search itself and the leadership potential the new president brings to the office.

In early December of 1991, the trustees of the University of Massachusetts launched a six-month search for a new president to head its five-campus system. Their efforts went beyond merely filling a vacancy: their long-term objective was to find someone who could lead the institution to the levels of strength and excellence that would turn it into the top-ranked university envisioned by the special blue-ribbon panel that had drafted the Saxon Commission Report in March 1989. Their more immediate objective was to find someone who could help them resolve their fiscal crisis and deal with racial divisions on campus.

The criteria developed by the search committee called for a leader of stature and vision, an institution builder, an individual of personal and intellectual integrity. They were looking for a successor to Elbert K. Fretwell, who had served as interim president for slightly more than a year. He had been recruited to replace president Joseph Duffey, whose sudden departure in March 1991 had left the board of trustees eager to fill the position temporarily or at least until they could find a more permanent replacement. Fretwell, nearing the end of his career, had filled the position on a stop-gap basis. With nine months of his incumbency remaining, he had been expected to step down from office at the end of August 1992.

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Comparing this search for a permanent president with those which preceded it, one finds some striking similarities and differences. From start to finish, the trustees went about their work efficiently and expeditiously, announcing the appointment of Michael K. Hooker as the new president in late May 1992. Curiously enough, the results of the search produced mixed reactions, if not opposite conclusions, especially when it came to drawing distinctions between process and outcome. As events would verify, the trustees were genuinely pleased with the outcome, regarding Michael Hooker as a superb choice. Although many faculty members liked the selection and seemed reasonably satisfied with Hooker, they were disturbed by the search process, which they saw as closed, secretive, unilateral, and undemocratic. But more about that later.

This article examines four separate but interrelated questions. First, why did the Hooker search work as well as it did from the perspective of the trustees and the members of the search committee? Second, what experience, if any, contributed to the outcome? Third, why did the faculty object to the search process? Fourth, what led the participants to reach such a high level of consensus about their final choice? Suitably explored, these and similar questions should shed light on presidential searches in general, and on the Michael Hooker selection in particular.

Before their memories faded and while the evidence was still fresh and discernible, I interviewed most of those who were involved in the search. They included all the trustees and faculty members who served on the search committee, plus students, alumni, faculty governance officials, two chancellors, the chairman of the board of trustees, and the new president. As a consequence, I have incorporated much of the information obtained from these interviews into this narrative and used it to interpret what actually happened. In addition, I examined all the pertinent public documents related to the search.

Most studies indicate that there is no perfect way to conduct a presidential search. Nor is there an ideal model that has universal application. What works at an elite private institution, for example, does not necessarily work at a public one, since the public nature of the search exposes it to sunshine laws, extensive press coverage, and the vicissitudes of state politics. Moreover, the competing forces involve people with conflicting interests and human frailties. They are usually engaged in a group process that is, by definition, less than perfect. Division and conflict are ordinary and inevitable, as are randomness and unpredictability.

Although the Hooker search exceeded ordinary expectations, it could not avoid the contentious group conflict and tensions that usually characterize such searches. These tensions, as we shall see, revolved around issues dealing with affirmative action, openness, confidentiality, the selection of the search committee, the balancing of process and outcome, campus visits by the candidates, and the enduring debate as to whether a "good search" produces a "good president."

Despite the tension, the UMass experience is important because it illustrates that presidential searches do indeed matter and that, if they are organized properly, they can identify the most appropriate person for the institution. The results of the search, however, were by no means limited to the choice of a new president. Interestingly, the search process afforded a unique opportunity for the university to examine its priorities and values and to consider the kind of leadership it desires. Achieving such a consensus was at best a delicate task, but it served to legitimate the new president

and to smooth his transition into office. Ultimately, most of these results were achieved in this particular case. What follows, then, is a reconstruction of the search in all its essential detail.

The Changing Faces of UMass

The UMass community is composed of many different people and many different parts. UMass was founded in 1863 as a small agricultural school that specialized in teaching scientific farming methods and researching problems related to growing crops and animal husbandry. The original aims and directions of UMass have changed dramatically through the years, but the aims of the School of Agriculture remain basically the same. By the turn of the century, nine field research and experiment stations were set up across the state to provide technical assistance to farm families through the cooperative extension service. Secluded in the farmlands of the majestic Connecticut River Valley, the original site at Amherst was UMass's only campus for the first hundred years of the school's existence. But this idyllic campus setting is largely a memory frozen in the past as its contemporary high-rise dormitories dwarf the surrounding landscape.

Affectionately known as Mass Aggie, the agricultural school was elevated to a state college in 1931 and to a full-fledged university in 1947. Shortly thereafter, with the return of numerous World War II veterans eager to obtain a college education with their GI benefits, UMass/Amherst grew considerably as the demand for admission expanded in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s. Many more professors were needed to teach the large numbers of students.

By the early 1960s, with the baby-boom generation reaching college age, two urban branch campuses were established in the cities of Boston and Worcester. The former was created as a nonresidential commuter campus, the latter as a state medical school. Within this state university system, the emergence of newer metropolitan universities in the population centers of Massachusetts have threatened the premier position of UMass/Amherst, whose academic rank is as one of the so-called public Ivies. Still the largest campus, Amherst evokes the most intense alumni loyalties and takes intercollegiate athletics, especially basketball, seriously.

Following the recommendations of the special blue-ribbon Saxon Commission, the University of Massachusetts system was enlarged in September 1991 from three campuses to five. At the same time, two separate and distinct public universities at Dartmouth and Lowell were merged with those at Amherst, Boston, and Worcester. As a result, the newly configured institution has become a modern comprehensive university spread across the commonwealth. Managing this complicated system is no easy task: it employs approximately twelve thousand faculty, professional, and classified staff, and its overall budget is close to a billion dollars. Collectively, the five campuses enroll nearly fifty-nine thousand students, who reflect in varying degree the ethnic, racial, and gender composition of the larger society. Besides the normal teenage high school graduates, working adults, single parents, elders, military veterans, and large numbers of foreign students have added significantly to its diversity. In the early 1990s, as the demographics of higher education continued to change, the UMass system was still in the process of defining itself.

The Role of the UMass President

As the state university has grown and greatly expanded its programs, the job of its chief executive officer has become much more complicated. More diverse groups and constituencies are sending more messages, making more demands, and applying greater pressure. The job is not only complex and difficult, but also multidimensional. A modern president is, among other things, chief administrator, chief negotiator, chief of external relations, and symbolic and ceremonial head of the academic community. The person holding the position wears several hats and performs many duties, ranging from preparing the budget to fund-raising and defusing explosive racial incidents on campus.¹

As its most visible advocate and roving ambassador of good will, the president represents the university at various ceremonial functions and important civic events. More to the point, he or she plays a vital role in formulating and implementing the central questions of university policy. The task requires someone who is relatively sophisticated about academic life and possesses the vision and leadership ability to advance its mission. The effective leader must also be equipped not only to comprehend a broad range of issues but also to speak clearly about them.

Strengthening the public university and actively marshaling its resources is the essential leadership role of the president. In dealing with state politicians and the media, the president plays an indispensable role in providing needed protection and lending coherence and meaning to its mission. Defending UMass along these lines is a constant struggle, one in which the incumbent must at times be prepared to do battle. In their landmark study of presidential searches, Judith McLaughlin and David Riesman describe the executive function as follows:

In the public sector of American higher education, college and university presidents must defend their institutions daily against the attacks and incursions that will make them mediocre. At the same time, they must lobby for the public funding necessary to maintain and improve their capacities for research and teaching. In both endeavors, the president is a central figure whose actions can enhance public relations or threaten the curtailment of public support.²

It is obvious, of course, that UMass presidents must be inclined to assert themselves — to feel sure that they ought to lead — if they are to be effective. This is a matter of values, of approach to political realities, and different presidents have manifested different styles. Some have aspired to no more than a modest overseer's role. Others have felt that the only route to administrative success, given the political conditions of the state, is to stir no fuss, to anger no one, to play it safe and wait for promotion as the head of a major institution somewhere else. Still other presidents, for example, John Lederle (1960–1970) and Robert Wood (1970–1977), have firmly believed that it was their duty to step out front and insist on leading.

It helps to remember that these presidents, like other public managers, are mortal humans with diverse strengths and weaknesses. As Duane Lockard, an observer of New England state politics, has aptly said:

Too often officials are rendered into abstractions by lumping all occupants of offices together and ignoring the tremendous variations that exist among human beings. We sometimes forget that some individuals inspire confidence and can

win loyalty and support where others cannot; that some can comprehend complex situations and see the interrelationships of problems and people and plan coordinated approaches accordingly while others can neither comprehend nor plan or explain. An individual lacking the qualities of leadership occupying an office well-endowed with formal authority may achieve remarkably little. An official who has formal power and leadership qualities but who is disinclined to use the authority he possesses will simply not be comparable to one of equal talents (or perhaps of lesser talents) who is determined to get action. The abilities, attitudes, personal traits, values — even the personal appearance — of individuals condition their effectiveness as leaders.³

These human differences assume even greater importance when one takes into account the role of the public university president, for the kinds of tasks to be performed require prodigious effort, energy, and patience in addition to ineffable personal qualities and abilities. Because the job is so demanding and survival so precarious, it is hard to find qualified people who are willing to take on such an arduous task. This is especially true during a period of economic austerity, when times are hard and the erratic fluctuation of rising costs and falling revenues squeezes the budget and leaves the president with little room to maneuver.

In setting objectives or trying to advance them persuasively under such adverse conditions, the chief executive finds his or her options severely limited. There is simply not enough money available to sustain the level of service. Operating under these constraints, rational decision making forces an executive to engage in downsizing the internal organization and reallocating its resources. Difficult decisions are necessary to keep its fiscal house in order and maintain a robust and responsible institution.

The Fiscal Crisis and Faculty Morale

Between 1988 and 1991, UMass suffered the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression as state funding declined precipitously. Suddenly, with the economy faltering, its immediate financial picture looked terrible, the long-run future bleak. In a protracted series of deep cuts that extended over this four-year period, 30 percent of its budget was slashed. These drastic cutbacks damaged faculty morale and reduced teaching positions, student enrollment, financial aid, library acquisitions, and administrative staff. Some academic programs were eliminated, resulting in many employee layoffs.⁴ Hiring freezes were accompanied by a policy of no pay raises. At one point the faculty and staff found themselves furloughed for a brief period. As these budgetary pressures mounted, the constant refrain heard on campus was to do more with less money.

To make up for the shortfalls, it became necessary to tap private foundations and corporate sources for additional dollars. The university also found that it had to increase student tuitions and fees substantially. But the crippled economy could not be blamed for all its woes. Some resulted from public dissatisfaction and the loss of legislative support. The public relations problems, partly the product of diminishing revenues, were fed by disparities between initial claims and actual performance. Yet one public opinion survey, conducted in Massachusetts in the late fall of 1989, found that 68 percent of the respondents would be willing to pay higher taxes if the money

raised were earmarked for the support of public colleges and universities.⁵ By early December 1991, however, UMass financing seemed to be as much at risk as it had been four years earlier.

The Legacy of Previous Searches

At this point we have to take a few steps backward in time to see the connection of previous searches, which is essential to reconstructing the story. Between 1970 and 1992, the University of Massachusetts had five presidents. The searches that produced them were fraught with difficulty in one form or another. When Robert Wood was selected as the first system president in 1970, the trustees interrupted the work of an ongoing search committee and unilaterally imposed their choice. As the appointing authority, they saw the selection of the chief executive officer as their exclusive prerogative. Such an imposed choice, however, created turmoil and consternation. The intervention by the trustees infuriated the faculty at the flagship campus in Amherst. Bungling marred the whole episode. The selection of Bob Wood immediately became a flaming symbol of an old-boy network.

On assuming the presidency, Wood was aggressive in asserting control over external as well as internal affairs. Within relatively short order, his personal style and mode of operation made him a figure of extreme controversy. He insisted on micromanaging at the campus level. This posture, coupled with the concentration of power in the president's office, did not sit well with the campus chancellors. They chafed at what they perceived as Wood's meddling. Before long, they were competing against each other over issues of internal organization and resource allocation. Wood won the power struggle, but the costs were high. It eventually led to the resignation of both chancellors — Oswald Tippo at Amherst and Francis Broderick at Boston. Whatever the problems Wood may have had along these lines, they should not be allowed to obscure his many notable accomplishments and presidential effectiveness.

In the wake of this rebellion, the trustees adopted a new policy on university governance in the spring of 1973. Recommended by a multicampus committee headed by Professor Robert Wellman, the policy gave faculty exclusive power over academic matters. The Wellman Report also outlined areas of "primary responsibility" for initiating action and called for some form of shared governance with faculty and students. The mood of the times had a great deal to do with bringing about such reform. As Riesman and McLaughlin remind us:

Civil rights activists and anti-war protesters brought issues of student power into the struggles for campus hegemony. The temporal juxtaposition of the increasing leverage of faculty and the visibility of student revolts had the consequence of developing a norm in which not only faculty members were included on presidential search committees, but one or more students as well.⁶

Consequently, the Wellman Report not only called for faculty and students to serve on presidential search committees, but also for them to be recommended by their respective governance bodies. While this new policy diffused for the moment the tensions that had been building since the creation of the new system, it did not

fundamentally alter the distribution of power.⁷ The trustees retained their right to govern the university.

When Bob Wood was ready to step down from office in 1977, the trustees decided to replace him with Franklin Patterson, whom they named as interim president. Patterson, who was chosen without any faculty consultation or participation, assumed a modest caretaker role. The same method was followed in 1990, when Joseph Duffey was chosen for the presidency. Trustee failure to consult faculty had become a recurring pattern. The one major exception was in 1978, when David Knapp was selected as president, the first time ever that faculty and students participated in a trustee search committee. The trustees scrupulously adhered to the Wellman Report and the governance principles of “joint effort” and “primary responsibility,” but the Knapp search was marred by lack of confidentiality and by a violation of the state’s “sunshine” or open-meeting law.

The same mistakes were repeated in 1991, when E. K. Fretwell was appointed president. In a state known for its political interference in public higher education, this last search became highly politicized and divisive. These searches provide chronological continuity to the story. Taken together, they left a legacy of mutual distrust between faculty and trustees that still lingers.⁸ Unless one understands the tensions surrounding them, one cannot fully comprehend the tensions and conflict that surrounded the Hooker search.

There was also the problem of a “revolving door” presidency. The rapid turnover of three presidents within five years, along with the exit of numerous administrators and teachers, was alarming in terms of institutional stability. Adversely affected by the drastic budget cuts in recent years, the power and prestige of the president’s office had suffered accordingly. In the late 1980s, Governor Michael Dukakis attempted to abolish the office. With a powerful state board of regents in place at the time, he saw the UMass president’s office as an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. But he did not succeed. Instead, the state board of regents was abolished by the legislature in 1991 and has since been replaced by a new agency known as the Higher Education Coordinating Council. There was also a lingering feeling that the expected leadership role in the president’s office was not being filled. All of this gave the upcoming search a sense of heightened urgency.

Devising a Search Strategy

In this onerous setting, the trustees were more than eager to find a new leader who could assert the authority of the office and revitalize the public university. They wanted someone who would be able to restore faculty morale and public confidence. Unsure of the political terrain and what lay ahead, the trustees were somewhat skittish about how to conduct a search that would avoid the blunders of yore. They had ample grounds for concern: no matter what they did, they were bound to be criticized. To quote McLaughlin and Riesman again:

Questions concerning how the search committee will be constituted, which constituents should be represented with membership on the search committee, and how these representatives should be determined often embroil a campus in controversy at the very outset of the search process. Similarly, the question of confidentiality versus publicity is often one of the most controversial issues.⁹

Against this background, board chairman Gordon Oakes asked trustee Daniel Taylor to chair the search committee. In naming Taylor, Oakes got as a bonus the benefit of a strong-minded individual with legal and political experience.¹⁰ A Boston attorney associated with the prestigious law firm of Hill and Barlow, Taylor was talented and well suited for the assignment. Prior to his appointment as a trustee, he had served as legal counsel to Governor Michael Dukakis, and from 1982 to 1986 he had chaired the state Judicial Nomination Commission, which gave him valuable experience in screening and selecting judges. From 1990 to 1991, Taylor had served on the state board of regents. His professional life provided sufficient flexibility so that he could devote the requisite time to a search. He began by reading everything he could find on the subject.

Reading and experience alike had taught Taylor that the trustees would have to conduct a different kind of search this time. He understood that it was no longer feasible for them to act unilaterally. As an attorney, he likewise understood that they were legally required to conduct a national search which complied with affirmative action guidelines and the state's open-meeting law. Both Taylor and Fretwell paid a special visit to David Riesman and Judith McLaughlin at Harvard University. These two experts in presidential searches discussed with Taylor and Fretwell the requisite procedures and ground rules for planning and executing a sound search.

Though Taylor wanted to find a dynamic leader, his judgment on what to do was disciplined by awareness of what had gone before and might happen again, and also by the potentials of the present. He knew firsthand how politicized the Fretwell search had been the previous year. His worst fear was that they might wind up with a "dull administrative bureaucrat" — a result, he felt, that would condemn the university to mediocrity. While he earnestly believed that the kind of motivated leader they were seeking was out there somewhere, he initially had some doubts about whether they would be able to attract such a person.¹¹ Acting on what he knew in terms of institutional history, he set the stage for that new direction. He was to push hard for a systemwide approach that would involve the five campuses acting as a unified entity. On that score he remained steadfast.

With these thoughts in mind, Taylor sat down with Gordon Oakes, and they put together a diverse and well-balanced search committee in terms of ethnic, racial, and gender composition. They were meticulous in naming people whose stature and presence added credibility in useful quarters, and they also appointed to the committee several trustees who represented both the old and the new campuses. All told, the search committee was comprised of seven trustees, three faculty members, several prominent civic, labor, and business leaders, alumni of the university, and four sitting presidents of other higher education institutions. Interim president E. K. Fretwell served as an *ex officio*, nonvoting member.

At the request of board chairman Gordon Oakes, Governor William Weld invited Neil Rudenstine, president of Harvard University, and Terrence Murray, president of Fleet Bank, the largest bank in New England, to join the group. Intrigued by the invitation, both men agreed to serve. The three other sitting presidents were Stanley Ikenberry of the University of Illinois, Elizabeth Kennan of Mount Holyoke College, and Katherine Sloan of Greenfield Community College.

In addition to Dan Taylor, the trustees included Joseph Finnerty of New Bedford, Michael Foley of Arlington, Peter Lewenberg of Waban, James O'Leary of Boston,

Alan Solomont of North Andover, and student trustee Thomas Winston of Lowell. The three faculty members were Ronald Story from Amherst, Miren Uriarte from Boston, and John Russell from Dartmouth. They were arbitrarily handpicked by Taylor and Oakes, not by their respective faculty colleagues. Along with a few others, former NBA basketball star Julius Erving and businessman Lawrence McKenna represented the alumni. Rounding out the group were James Bailey, a member of the state Higher Education Coordinating Council, Hugina McNally, a labor union official, Benaree Wiley, president of a minority community organization, and Bing Lou Wong, a business executive. The search committee's twenty-two members represented the right political mix, but some faculty considered it a public relations gimmick.

No sooner had the membership of the search committee been announced than trouble started. Rumbles of discord were heard concerning the composition of the committee and the manner in which it had been chosen. Campus chancellors were upset because they were denied representation, and students felt that they were seriously underrepresented. Faculty at both the Boston and Lowell campuses were likewise upset because they had not been consulted. The faculty at Lowell contended that trustee failure to consult them amounted to a breach of their contract. At Boston they argued that the trustee action violated provisions of their Faculty Council constitution. In their view, the constitution was a two-party document that could not be abrogated without the consent of the other party.

More serious and worrisome, the faculty complained that the three professors who had been chosen to represent them had not been recommended by their respective faculty governance bodies as was specified in the Wellman Report. Such protests made little headway. Professor Charles Knight, who chaired the Faculty Council at Boston, wrote a forceful letter to Taylor, explaining that the faculty regarded themselves as entitled to have a voice in the selection of the next president. The trustee decisions were briefly contested in an exchange of letters, but to no avail. As Knight later explained, "It would have been just too disruptive to file litigation at this point."¹² Professor Paul Tucker, who served as faculty representative to the board of trustees from the Boston campus, was of the same opinion. He believed that it would have been too damaging to the search process. Nevertheless, Tucker argued that the trustee action amounted to "an abrogation of faculty primary responsibility."¹³

Since Taylor was a lawyer, that problem fell initially to him. Taking a firm stand, he refused to be budged. Not long in coming, though, was the answer to the question. By the time the faculty had exchanged correspondence with Taylor, the point was moot. The trustees' charge to the search committee directing it to recommend three candidates to the board for selection was approved by the trustees on December 4, 1991. In drafting the motion to approve the charge, Taylor carefully worded it to read, "It is hereby voted, notwithstanding any other policy or procedure to the contrary."¹⁴ It was a subtle power play. By playing this card, Taylor had finessed the faculty, who were angry. They regarded Taylor's move as deliberately provocative in nature. But the faculty was too demoralized to protect their legitimate interests.

By a stroke of a pen, the trustees had wiped the slate clean by short-circuiting the Wellman Report. They purposely did not want to appoint a student and faculty member from each campus. Strategically, their intent here was to foster a sense of "system awareness" and to sharpen sensitivity toward the idea that decisions should be

made in the interests of the university as a whole. They were concerned that competing forces from rival campuses might use their influence as potential veto groups, and that this set of circumstances might conceivably lead to stalemate or possible separatism and division. The trustees also wanted to maintain control of the search and to reassert their appointing authority. Above all, they were determined to find a new president without getting bogged down in what they deemed as time-consuming and counterproductive entanglements over process.

E. K. Fretwell's contribution was crucial. When he was appointed president he had agreed not to become a candidate for the permanent position. His pledge sent a message to the outside world that the search was on the level, or at least that it was not rigged for an insider. Fretwell also agreed to help the trustees find a permanent president with whom they could feel comfortable. Moreover, he suggested that the search committee seek its own independent space in which to operate.

Following his advice, they obtained an office at One International Place in downtown Boston, which was physically removed from any campus and from the university's central office. This had symbolic importance, reinforcing the impression that the search committee was running its own show. The downtown location gave them a place where committee records could be kept under tight security. In all, Fretwell's counsel made their job a lot easier. The search committee hired Stephen Kulik, who had worked as a consultant to former president Joseph Duffey at the Amherst campus, as executive director to coordinate its activities. All their meetings were posted and held in accordance with the requirements of the Massachusetts open-meeting law.

Another participant who contributed significantly was Ronald Story. A professor of history at Amherst, he was secretary of its Faculty Senate and director of the University Fund for the Future. Prior to the search, Story had written a paper entitled "Our Present Ordeal: A Historical Note," which he presented to an alumni leadership conference on June 16, 1991. In his paper he traced four distinct cycles of university growth and looked at the present issue with a sense of both the past and the future.¹⁵ At least in some general way, he brought to bear an understanding of how UMass had evolved as an institution of higher learning and how it had arrived at its current predicament in 1991. That understanding contributed immensely to the committee's deliberations.

Afterward, Taylor referred to Story as "the intellectual godfather of the search." Both men came from public land-grant universities, and both had done graduate work at similar institutions. Taylor had attended the University of Illinois, Story the University of Texas. Close friends, they frequently went on fishing trips together. More important, both men shared a dream of building a first-class university comparable to the great public universities of the Midwest.¹⁶

For his part, Story moved expeditiously to help straighten things out with regard to the thorny issue of faculty consultation. On January 7, 1992, an informal coordinating group composed of faculty governance officials from the five campuses met at the Publick House in Sturbridge. This group, which was organized at Story's suggestion, was formed partly to facilitate informal faculty involvement in the search and partly to smooth ruffled feathers over the divisive issue of consultation. Fretwell and Taylor were invited to attend. The main agenda item was the presidential search. This meeting gave those in attendance a chance to sound off and to express their concerns.

Before the group adjourned, they agreed to meet at least once a month while the search was going on, an agreement they kept.

It should be noted that the five campus faculty representatives, who served as liaison to the board of trustees, were also part of this group. They interacted with the trustees and shared information with their faculty colleagues. This sort of linkage and communication was important, because it enhanced the process by making it more inclusive. Yet participants like Paul Tucker sensed that faculty were going to be avoided as much as possible.

Launching the Search

A few weeks later, on January 21, the search committee held its first meeting. Piedad Robertson, secretary of education, who brought greetings from Governor William Weld, spoke about the importance of the presidency and higher education's need for accountability. Dan Taylor proposed a schedule for carrying out the search and indicated his desire to conclude it by the June 3 meeting of the board of trustees. He then outlined three tasks that needed to be done and asked for volunteers to work on them. These tasks involved (1) developing a case statement; (2) establishing a compensation package; and (3) selecting a search firm.¹⁷

Given his prior experience in selecting state judges, Taylor put a high premium on confidentiality. He knew what could go wrong and was afraid that attractive candidates might be scared off if their names were disclosed prematurely. Similarly, he feared that intrusive news media might dismantle the search process if there were leaks. Several trustees on the search committee believed that strict confidentiality should be maintained until the full board had made its selection. In other words, they felt that no one, except the members of the search committee and the board, should ever know the identity of any candidate other than the new president. They honored this commitment.

A lengthy discussion then followed on the kind of leadership they desired. The search committee agreed to disagree about specific candidates, especially at this early stage of the search. Their discussions were far-ranging but centered on the question of whether the university faced a long-term or short-term managerial problem. Improvement depended on personalities and circumstances. On the one hand, they felt that if it was a short-term problem, it required bringing in someone who would make tough managerial decisions, even at the risk of alienating the academic community. On the other hand, if the problem was a long-term one, the dynamic changed appreciably. Under these conditions, they felt that a new president could not win the long-term battle without genuine support from the faculty at large. They pretty much decided that their dilemma fell into the latter category. "The tenor of this discussion was the single most important determinant of the search," Ron Story later said, trying to evoke the feeling in the room.¹⁸

The next step was to select the search consultants. After soliciting proposals from ten recognized executive search firms, the subcommittee interviewed three and chose Academic Search Consultation Service (ASCS), a nonprofit firm based in Washington, D.C. This firm, run by Ronald Stead and Allan Ostar, had a good track record in working with public universities. Stead himself was a graduate of Michigan State University. Trustee Michael Foley checked them out thoroughly. In his words, "They

not only understood the cost factor and were reasonably priced, but they also were not in it to rip us off.”¹⁹ Stanley Ikenberry, president of the University of Illinois, was very helpful in selecting the consultants.

As things developed, it became clear that Stead and Ostar knew their business. They had previously been involved in some 127 searches in higher education. They operated with the utmost integrity and extended the reach of the search committee. A trust relationship soon developed between them. Meanwhile, Stead for his part came to realize that the search was on the level, especially when he heard an unidentified trustee jokingly remark, “This search is wired to be nonpolitical.”²⁰ Since ASCS eventually discovered Michael Hooker, they were well worth their price.

Formulating the Announcement

The early stages of the search proceeded routinely. Through February and into March, Dan Taylor met personally with each of the five chancellors, their senior staff, and in some instances, academic deans and student leaders as well as with key central office staff. The views of several prominent educators outside the university were also sought. At the same time, the search consultants undertook a similar series of meetings to develop their own views of the university’s leadership needs. They shared their findings with the trustees in a detailed memorandum. While this memorandum mentioned the various pitfalls and priorities of the search, it also urged the trustees to provide the budget necessary to run the president’s office before the new president was appointed. If this was not done, the next executive would be blamed for the inevitable need to increase the resources to operate the office.²¹ That was wise, considering what Taylor ultimately set out to achieve.

These meetings, aided by discussions within the search committee, produced a draft “Announcement” that defined the objectives of the search and made the case for why a motivated leader should want to seek the UMass presidency. Ron Story wrote the initial draft of the document, which was then widely circulated on the five campuses. It served as the basis of discussion at public hearings, which were held on each campus in early March. Those who spoke at these hearings commented on the qualities that they would like to see in the new president. Taylor had to keep his case focused on this issue distinct from and unimpaired by the hostility he himself might arouse while doing such work.

Taylor himself was highly involved in this second phase of the search. He talked frankly with the various constituencies on campus, in terms befitting their status, appealing more to logic than to parochial campus views, offering the outline of a lawyer’s brief and asking them to help him fill it in. Taylor avowedly sought to start a dialogue and offer a process that allowed for appropriate input. He gave them a chance to air their complaints and welcomed their feedback. Faculty members were worried that the trustees might prefer a nonacademic person, perhaps someone from the business community or the political world.

After the public hearings, Taylor revised the case statement and integrated the campus feedback into it. The document no doubt benefited from such contributions. It described the presidential job opening as providing a challenging opportunity for someone “to leave his or her indelible mark on this unshaped system.” This incentive had a powerful appeal. As Taylor put it: “Through the power of words, we

encouraged people out there to take a shot at us. We didn't complain about the budget cuts, and we didn't promise them a bed of roses."²²

Despite its length, the document made very clear that the committee was seeking a person who could lead, not simply manage. More precisely, they wanted someone who possessed four basic qualities: (1) a leader of public stature; (2) a creator of vision; (3) an institution builder; and (4) an individual of personal and intellectual integrity. Under each of these categories they listed numerous other criteria.²³ In sum, they wanted a high-energy "evangelical" leader who would hit the road and take the message of the university to the far corners of the state. The job profile left no doubt as to the kind of visionary person they had in mind, and everyone benefited from this clarity.

But as ever in Massachusetts, it was the person in power that mattered most, so the focus of attention swiftly shifted to the new governor, William Weld, who came from a privileged Yankee Brahmin social background. Harvard-educated and a patrician by disposition, Weld was fast becoming a convert with regard to the importance of public higher education to the state's economy. Not long in office and still popular, he had changed his position dramatically from the previous year, when he had threatened to close some public colleges and impose harsh budget cuts. Speaking to a conference of environmentalists and civic leaders at UMass/Boston on March 6, Weld declared:

The more I see of our system of public higher education in Massachusetts, the better I like it. I do not think that everything that works in education costs money, and not everything that costs money works. However, I've said before, and I'll say it again, that when we get a little bit of daylight and the fiscal crunch eases up a little bit in Massachusetts, higher education will be standing, if not first in line, at least tied for first place with the claimants on our public resources.²⁴

To be sure, Weld's conversion along these lines was an important development, because his support would later bolster the search at a crucial stage.

The Compensation Package

Meanwhile, in late March, a subcommittee composed of trustees Finnerty, Lewenberg, O'Leary, and Taylor, plus James Bailey of the Higher Education Coordinating Council, began working on an executive compensation report to establish salary guidelines for the UMass presidency. The salary issue, which had been troublesome in years past, had not been reviewed or revisited since the merger in 1991. It was of crucial importance to the overall scheme of things. According to them:

The last thing we need, as one of our Chancellors put it, is someone who gets a lot of balls up in the air and then leaves after 3 or 4 years because he or she knows they can't catch them. Clearly, building the kind of top-ranked public university system that the Trustees desire will take a solid, ten-year effort by the new President. The Trustees should not expect the job to be finished, or for the end to be in sight in ten years. But with the right leader, ten years is, perhaps, time to reach the end of the beginning.²⁵

The goal here was to recommend guidelines that would enable the trustees to offer a competitive salary and fringe benefits that would compare favorably with those at similar public universities across the country. What is more, they wanted to be able to accomplish this goal before the search committee began considering candidates. By so doing, they could avoid the possible embarrassment at the end of the search of the impression that they were haggling over salary, or that the person they had picked was holding out for more money. As they said:

Principles of equity and fairness are served in the short term by doing this now. And long-term harmony is also fostered if the new President, on the one hand, doesn't come with the idea that the Trustees are cheap and will have to be reeducated along the way, and the Trustees, on the other hand, don't feel that they were taken to the cleaners.²⁶

Since the compensation question was such a sensitive issue politically, they did not want to saddle the new president with the political liability of a package being designed specifically for him or her.

Other public university systems were surveyed to determine the salary of their chief executive officers, and published data was researched. The UMass subcommittee recommended a basic salary of \$150,000 to \$175,000. By comparison, former president Joseph Duffey had been paid \$130,000, plus a \$30,000 annuity payable at his retirement. Among other fringe benefits, the subcommittee recommended that the housing allowance be somewhere between \$19,000 and \$30,000, and if necessary, a noninterest-bearing second mortgage loan of up to \$200,000 be made available, this to be repaid when the president's house was sold. The subcommittee made its recommendations to the full search committee, which in turn endorsed and forwarded the report through its chair to the board of trustees in early April. These recommendations received active endorsement by the trustees. From then on, the salary issue would be negotiated with the person who was finally selected as president.

Casting the Net

On March 15, the "Announcement," along with a cover letter from Dan Taylor, was mailed to more than nine hundred knowledgeable people, asking them for suggestions and assistance in developing a pool of prospects. As is true in most presidential searches, advertisements were placed in publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Black Issues in Higher Education*. No specific application deadline was mentioned. On this point, Taylor created some breathing room by saying that the search committee planned to present its report to the board of trustees by the summer of 1992. The troubles at UMass had been widely publicized, and some feared that it would be difficult to attract good candidates.²⁷

Once the net was fully cast, names of prospects came to the search committee from four different sources. First, seventeen applications were received in response to the advertisements. Second, in response to the March Announcement mailing, fifty-three names were suggested as possibilities. Third, members of the search committee suggested forty names. Fourth, the search consultants developed a list of thirty-nine prospects.²⁸

At its April 6 meeting, the search committee began to focus on potential prospects. Names like U.S. Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and former U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas surfaced. Although Tsongas had chaired the state board of regents, it was felt that he carried too much political baggage. Nobody wanted to see a repetition of the clamorous public spectacle that took place in 1991, when former Massachusetts House Speaker David Bartley sought the position and the search became highly politicized. These past mistakes were to be avoided as much as possible. At one point in the meeting, trustee Michael Foley, a medical doctor, suggested that in order to be sure they were getting the best pool of applicants possible, they should think of three people in their own fields of endeavor. He then went out and brought back the names of three prospects in the field of medicine. By this time, however, most of the participants were looking for an academic rather than a politician or a business executive. Although they did not formally rule out the category, there was general agreement that they would consider only an extraordinary nonacademic as a strong contender.²⁹

Several duplicate names surfaced on the four lists. The search committee reviewed them and decided to focus its attention on a limited number. Most of the people were then contacted by the search consultants to determine their level of interest, if any, in the presidency. During this third phase of the search, the focus was on twenty-seven prospects from throughout the country. In comparison with previous searches, it was a shallow pool of prospects. Of these, nine were women, and eight were African-Americans. Several were chief executives of campuses within public university systems. A few were high-level system executives. Some were deans of colleges at public universities. Still others had distinguished themselves in academic life and public affairs. Soon after this screening, the search committee decided that they would not pursue anyone at the dean level or below. They were warned that their focus on "prospects" did not necessarily imply any reciprocal interest, and in many instances that proved to be the case. All in all, a number of well-qualified individuals expressed preliminary interest.

The name of Michael Hooker, who was then president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, first appeared on the consultants' — Ronald Stead and Allan Ostar's — list. A gifted scholar and highly respected administrator generally recognized as having a talent for leadership, Hooker seemed to them to be an attractive candidate. He also had a reputation for taking risks. By temperament, he was a builder and an innovator. A check of his curriculum vitae revealed his record of scholarly publications — he had edited two books and published eighteen articles in his academic discipline of philosophy.³⁰ Stead knew of his availability and contacted Hooker to determine if he might be interested in the job. At first pass, Hooker turned Stead down, mainly because he did not believe that the Massachusetts economy would rebound quickly enough. Under such circumstances, he saw himself having to implement more budget cuts for the next five years. Since Hooker was more interested in building an institution than in downsizing it, he saw no point in pursuing the UMass presidency any further.

But this did not stop Taylor and the search committee from courting him. Sensing from the start that Hooker might be a prize catch, someone who might more than meet the search committee's criteria, they persisted in their efforts and managed to convince him that the situation in Massachusetts was promising despite the state's sluggish economy. Actively countering all his doubts, they persuaded Hooker to

apply for the university presidency. At the time, he was under serious consideration for the presidency of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, but owing to complications in his private life, he was undecided about his next career move.

Meantime, in mid-to-late April, those prospects who expressed interest in the UMass presidency were invited to meet informally with a small group of search committee members. These exploratory sessions were designed to determine whether the committee wanted to encourage further involvement, and conversely, whether the individual wished to pursue his or her preliminary attraction. At the May 6 meeting of the search committee, Taylor announced that with regard to their affirmative action efforts, serious contacts had been made, but noted that there was no further interest expressed on the part of those identified. Because of the severe funding problem and the perceived negative racial climate in Boston, several good minority candidates who met the affirmative action profile either withdrew or refrained from pursuing their candidacy.³¹ Nevertheless, some critics felt that the search committee should have pursued the minority candidates as vigorously as they pursued Hooker.

By the end of the May 6 meeting, the search committee decided which prospects they desired to invite back for another meeting. They had narrowed their short list to four candidates, none Hispanic or African-American, and only one female.³² At this point, Taylor went back to the board of trustees and asked them to change their charge to the search committee to allow it to recommend four candidates instead of three as originally specified. The trustees agreed to do so. With four "good fish" in the net, Taylor saw no point in delaying the process any further. Rather than let the process drag out until early summer and run the risk of losing their catch, he accelerated the schedule by two weeks and moved up the next meeting of the search committee to May 12.

Landing Michael Hooker

On May 12 the search committee met with the four finalists, all of whom had completed legal forms asserting their privacy rights. They were assured that their names and comments would be kept in strictest confidence. As a precautionary measure, Taylor had lined up in advance sufficient votes to go into executive session to achieve this objective. He was even willing to risk a lawsuit should it prove necessary. As a lawyer, he felt that case law would support their position, but no one challenged them on the issue. Consequently, the privacy of the candidates was well preserved and their identities remained a closely guarded secret.

The search committee then split into two groups for interview purposes, making sure that none of the candidates saw one another. During the course of these interviews, both groups asked each candidate the same set of questions:

Based on your current understanding, what interests you the most in this position and what are your reservations? What would be your priorities for the first six months of your administration? What is the most difficult decision you've had to make recently? What have been your successes in regard to addressing the needs of minorities on campus? What would your message be to the opinion leaders of the state and the campuses with regard to improving race relations and the education of minority students?³³

Of the four finalists, Michael Hooker quickly emerged as the leading contender. He was an ambitious as well as an able man. More than that, in the view of the search committee, he had impressive credentials and a record of administrative achievement in both the private and public sectors of higher education. Hooker had earned his B.A. degree with highest honors in 1969 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he majored in philosophy. Continuing to do graduate work in the same field, he went on to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he received his M.A. in 1972 and his Ph.D. in 1973. To the extent that there is a customary career line to a university presidency, Hooker had pursued it. From a faculty position at Harvard University, he moved to Johns Hopkins University, where, from 1975 to 1982, he held a variety of posts. He first served as assistant professor of philosophy, then as assistant dean and associate dean, and finally, at the age of thirty-five, as dean of undergraduate and graduate studies.

From 1982 to 1986 Hooker served as president of Bennington College in Vermont, where he first achieved public notice as a skilled fiscal manager. In retrospect, he admits that as a "rookie president" he did not know the right questions to ask beforehand. On his first day in office, he was informed that there was not enough money to meet the payroll at the end of the month. To make matters worse, he inherited a weak and unprofessional administrative apparatus. In short order, Hooker oversaw a refinancing of Bennington's debt, using long-term tax-exempt bonds that included a provision for repayment. In addition, he demonstrated an ability to raise a substantial amount of money, in fact raising more than \$6 million and increasing total gift support by 80 percent. He also streamlined the college's marketing strategy, professionalized its administrative staff, and strengthened its board of trustees. Committed to holding the line on spending, Hooker made some tough decisions that enabled the college to survive its fiscal crisis. The evidence of his accomplishments is documented in a detailed case study written by a faculty member at the Yale School of Management.³⁴

After this success, Hooker accepted the presidency at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), in 1986, where he continued to make a name for himself. To the surprise of no one who knew him, he brought about change in two specific areas: improving academic quality and increasing access, especially for minority students. During his six years there, which extended from 1986 to 1992, he boosted enrollment by 20 percent at the undergraduate level and 150 percent in graduate programs. Student retention also improved, with the number of bachelor's degrees granted increasing by 53 percent.

Hooker took fresh initiatives on a variety of fronts. He established an honors college and launched the much-publicized Meyerhoff Scholarship Program for black students who were gifted in science and technology. He also built strong links with Maryland's business community. He initiated new academic programs in biotechnology, biochemical engineering, and bioprocess manufacturing, and with the help of business corporations like Westinghouse and Martin Marietta, he began new specializations in photonics and robotics. Furthermore, he developed a working model of collaboration between UMBC and Catonsville Community College.³⁵

On another front, Hooker had been working on a proposed merger between UMBC and the medical school in downtown Baltimore. In order to achieve the political support necessary to get the enabling legislation passed in the Maryland legislature, he had to build an alliance between the rival city and county legislative

delegations, which traditionally had been at odds with each other. While engaged in this endeavor, he suddenly realized that there was one remaining obstacle in the way, namely, himself. Perceived as an empire builder by medical faculty who saw their budget threatened, Hooker sensed that things would go much better if he bowed out gracefully. Such a move was, of course, extremely good politics. As soon as he declared that he would not be a candidate for the head of the merged institution, the legislative proposal gained momentum.

Amid speculation about Hooker's altruistic motives, the bill was approved by the governor, the board of regents, the commissioner of education, and the House of Representatives, but it was killed in committee in the state Senate. At this point, Hooker decided that he had done all that he could possibly do at UMBC and that it was time for him to move on.

For these reasons, Hooker impressed the search committee and the other trustees who were invited to sit in on the interviews. His point of view was fresh, eager, and confident. He conveyed his belief that with political will and courage the future was manageable. In laying out his vision of the future university, Hooker provided them with persuasive and imaginative ideas. He seemed in full command of every question and absolutely confident about his ability to build a diverse and interactive public university that would meet the societal demands of the twenty-first century. His performance, from all accounts, was impressive.

Hooker came across in the interviews as an ideal person to fill the role of president and fit committee criteria better than the other three candidates. According to Professor Miren Uriarte, "Hooker had presented the most coherent vision of the role of public higher education in this state, both in terms of access to minorities, and in terms of cost."³⁶ Hooker's major shortcoming was that he lacked experience in running a university system. More a visionary than a manager of details, he was not likely to micromanage at the campus level. Actually, he had operated under such a situation at UMBC, and he understood what it was like to operate in the shadow of a "flagship campus."

At forty-six years of age, Hooker saw the UMass opportunity as the next logical step in his career ladder. On this point, he felt confident that he could do a good job as a system head. That was one reason why the UMass presidency appealed to him. It was a relatively new system, at least as far as the addition of the Dartmouth and Lowell campuses was concerned. The other reasons for job appeal were that Hooker was a UMass alumnus who loved the game of politics and wanted to come back to Massachusetts.³⁷ The four years he had spent at UMass/Amherst during the early 1970s would stand him in good stead.

Hooker was such a striking personality that committee members could not help looking at the other colorful aspects of his life. He was born in Richlands, Virginia, on August 24, 1945, the only son of a coal miner. Soon after his birth, the family moved to the heart of Appalachia in West Virginia near the Kentucky border, where they lived in the midst of abject poverty. At the school young Hooker attended, most of the boys in his class chewed tobacco and wore no shoes. Many of the people living in this rural mountainous region suffered from stark deprivation that resulted from disease, poverty, and malnutrition. Growing up in a coal-mining town, Hooker came to understand the problems of working people and why they needed labor unions to protect them. His whole outlook on life was to be deepened by this sobering experience.

To see how Hooker's life as a coal miner's son shaped his values, one more insight must be added to the composite of his makeup. From early childhood, his parents had told him repeatedly that he was the smartest kid around. They stressed the importance of education. In fact, they consciously decided to have only one child because they wanted him to obtain a college education in order to make it out of the coal mines. In his high school years they drove him around during summer vacations to see college campuses in the South, but they were too ashamed of their poverty to get out of their automobile. Hooker believed deeply in what he was first taught. As he recalls, "My father had desperately wanted to go to college, but he had to work in the mines in order to take care of his father, who suffered from black lung disease. He taught me two things — nobody is better than you, and you are better than nobody."³⁸ This became a defining moment for him. As a result of these childhood experiences, Hooker grew up acquiring humility on the one hand and self-confidence on the other. This dichotomy explains a great deal about his personal style and mode of operation.

Coming from such humble origins and achieving such success, Hooker struck a responsive chord with the search committee. They saw him as someone who not only understood and appreciated the value of public higher education, but also as someone who could take it to a higher level of quality, diversity, and access. The trustees felt that Hooker's intimate knowledge of UMass/Amherst, obtained while he was a graduate student there, would enable him to hit the ground running. They liked the idea that he had both public and private sector experience. They also liked the idea that he had headed an urban campus similar to UMass/Boston and that he had worked closely with a medical center similar to UMass/Worcester. In fact, the similarities between UMBC and UMass/Boston were striking. Most of all, they liked the track record that he had established in terms of promoting good race relations.³⁹ This had direct relevance to UMass/Amherst, where racial tensions had reached an all-time high in recent years. Hooker also had established a good rapport with the clerical and professional staff at UMBC. All this seemed clear enough to the trustees. They were definitely not interested in anyone who was nearing the end of his or her career. Hooker, at forty-six, was still in his prime. As was becoming rapidly apparent, he seemed fully qualified for the job.

At the conclusion of the May 12 interviews, the members of the search committee had reduced their options to three prospects. Ranking them, they unanimously recommended Hooker as their first choice. They admired his abilities and understood his limitations. Their comparisons of him with the other three candidates sharpened their consensus for selectivity. So it was settled. Hooker was the person they wanted for the job. Thus, his was the only name they forwarded to the full board of trustees. All three faculty members on the search committee concurred with this decision. The student trustee, Thomas Winston of UMass/Lowell, was noticeably absent from this meeting.

Obscured from public view by the shroud of secrecy that concealed their identities, the other three prospects remain a mystery to the outside world, including the academic community. As a consequence, they quickly faded into complete anonymity. The accounts that come down to us reveal only the vaguest kind of identifying characteristics. All of them were professional academic administrators, and all of them headed an institution of higher learning. None came from New England. One

was a female, another was near the end of his career. Based on what they heard in the interviews, the search committee decided not to recommend the fourth candidate.

An Abbreviated Courtship

Because the search was moving so rapidly at this point, the courtship of Michael Hooker was fast and furious. It was not a prolonged romance. As Hooker himself explained, "The committee saw very quickly that I was exactly what they were looking for, and they were able to convince me reasonably quickly that this opportunity afforded what I was looking for. So I would say that it was a fairly short courtship, because we each knew a great deal about the other before the courtship began."⁴⁰ As the talks continued, Hooker assured the trustees that he planned to stay at UMass for the next ten years, a commitment all participants felt was essential for the next president.

Nevertheless, Hooker would not commit himself one way or the other until after he had a chance to speak with the key political leaders in Massachusetts. He wanted to take some soundings from them to see where they stood on public higher education. No longer a neophyte president, he knew the "right questions" to ask this time. Arrangements were made for him to meet with Governor William Weld, a Republican, and Senate president William Bulger and House Speaker Charles Flaherty, both Democrats. He also met with Piedad Robertson, the secretary of education, and Paul Marks, the chancellor of higher education. These preappointment meetings went well. Hooker came away from them feeling that he could garner the necessary political support to build the twenty-first-century university that he had in mind. With such assurances, he agreed to accept the job for a five-year term. Behind the scenes, the trustees earlier that spring had received strong signals from the governor's office and from the legislative leadership that they could expect a favorable budget if they made a good selection.⁴¹

Another cause of concern, from Taylor's standpoint, was how to introduce Hooker to the chancellors and faculty leaders without blowing his cover. Worried about possible leaks if the work of the search committee were conducted on campus, the lawyer-trustee who chaired the search committee had ruled out the possibility of campus visits by the candidates. Not everyone was happy with this development. It meant that the five chancellors and their respective constituencies had yet to meet Hooker. They were peeved, not without justification, because they had not been allowed to interview him before the search committee had made its recommendations to the board of trustees.⁴²

Understandably, the chancellors as a group felt that they had been completely bypassed. They saw this intentional omission and the disallowance of campus visits as a "double failure" in process. It not only meant that the five campuses had no chance to get to know the candidates, but the candidates in turn had no chance to respond to campus concerns. The problem was partially resolved, but it did not happen until twenty-four hours before the full board of trustees voted.

On May 26, the chancellors, along with the informal group of faculty governance officials, finally got to meet Hooker at the central office in Boston. When Taylor introduced him to the assembled group, he reportedly remarked, "We are still operating in our stealth mode."⁴³ Both the chancellors and the faculty members felt that this

was secrecy carried to extremes. Such treatment rankled them and reinforced the earlier impression that they were to be avoided as much as possible. As they saw it, the decision had already been made and the vote of the board, which was scheduled for the next day, was a mere formality.

While Hooker was making the rounds at the State House on May 26, he did not pass unnoticed. Word of his being the unanimous choice of the search committee was leaked to the press. Anthony Flint, writing in the *Boston Globe*, broke the story the next day.⁴⁴ When it appeared, Taylor was upset with the leak. Prior to the appearance of the news story, all aspects of the search had been kept confidential. Now all that was gone in an instant. Since the news story came out the very day that the trustees voted, it did not seriously hurt Hooker's position.

Meanwhile, Taylor had been busy checking out Hooker with his former employers and other leading educators. Following standard operating procedure for such high-level appointments in state government, the state police conducted its own separate background investigation. On May 20, both trustee Joseph Finnerty and faculty member Ronald Story flew to Baltimore to check out Hooker on their own and to talk with others at UMBC about him as a potential president for UMass.

As Finnerty later explained, "The trip provided us with a chance to go down and kick the tires of the automobile that we were going to buy."⁴⁵ He spoke with a variety of people, including UMBC provost Adam Yarmolinsky; Errol Reese, president of the medical school; Theodore Peck, a housing expert; Thomas Chmura, a member of the Greater Baltimore Committee; and Barbara Plantholt, a graduate of the MIT Sloan School of Management, all of whom had nice things to say about Hooker. For example, Plantholt candidly told Finnerty, "Grab him. This guy can sit down at the table with the presidents of Harvard and MIT, and you will know that he belongs at the table."⁴⁶

The responses Story solicited were much the same. He talked with three faculty members, two campus academic administrators, one central office administrator, and one minority student. Freeman Hrabowski, a black professional administrator at UMBC, told Story that "Hooker had turned the institution around on a dime." Hrabowski was impressed with how he had arranged functions. For example, Hooker had placed athletics under student affairs, which resulted in a more constructive relationship between athletics and the quality of student life.⁴⁷

A female clerical worker who gave Finnerty and Story a ride to the airport told them that one of the things she liked most about Hooker is that he made her feel important at the end of the workday. Perhaps of greater significance were the insights provided by Willie Lamouse-Smith, a professor of African-American studies, who commented: "Hooker goes out to put forward ideas and to fight with the politicians and get us what we need to build this place. Before he came, this place was always the whipping boy for the Baltimore papers. Nobody whips us around anymore."⁴⁸ All these accounts suggested that Hooker had good political skills when it came to dealing with the news media and with the political establishment.

But on the negative side, an ethical cloud hovered over Hooker's personal finances. In another article that appeared in the *Boston Globe*, Anthony Flint reported that Hooker may have improperly used money from the University of Maryland Foundation for his mortgage payments, baby-sitters, and lawn furniture.⁴⁹ Reacting to the negative publicity he had received, Hooker claimed that he had done no wrong. Acknowledging that he may have made a "political error" in spending the money for

such purposes, he said that it had been negotiated as part of his overall compensation package. On this sticky point, he apparently satisfied the scrutiny of the trustees as well as the state police who had investigated the matter.

When all the various background checks had been completed, Taylor was ready to go to the board of trustees. He asked Gordon Oakes to schedule a special meeting, which was held on May 27. There Taylor gave a full report of the search and thoroughly briefed his colleagues. Despite its drama, the vote of the trustees to offer Hooker the presidency ended in anticlimax. There was little discussion. The vote was unanimous.⁵⁰ Earlier actions foretold such results, had anyone cared to notice. The committee's unanimity meant more than most people realized.

After this meeting, Hooker held a press conference in which he spoke about the importance of the university to the future of the state economy and its citizens. He also announced that his first priority would be to instill public confidence in the university, declaring: "I am convinced that one can rebuild public confidence, public trust, and public pride."⁵¹ At the same press conference, search consultant Ron Stead publicly acknowledged that of the 128 searches in which his firm had been involved, this one was by far the most efficient. The Hooker appointment became effective on September 1, 1992.

As things turned out, the trustees offered Hooker a salary of \$175,000. This figure represented a 35 percent increase over what former president Joseph Duffey had been paid. When all the fringe benefits were added to Hooker's base salary, the total compensation package came close to \$200,000. Other major public university systems were in a similar range. To cite a few examples, Rutgers University in New Jersey, Michigan State University, and the University of Maryland all pay their presidents \$175,000. On a somewhat higher scale, the University of Texas pays its president \$203,000, while the University of California pays its system head \$307,000 (which includes deferred compensation). When one compares these figures with those of Hooker, his pay was competitive and not out of line.

Once information about the compensation package was released, however, it evoked a public outcry and produced much adverse publicity, which was not unexpected. Newspaper editorials sternly rebuked the trustees for paying Hooker what they considered to be an outrageous salary.⁵² So did some faculty members.⁵³ Since both faculty and staff had not received any pay raises over the past four years, the issue was bound to be controversial. It was a no-win situation for the trustees and the president: there was no way to rationalize his high salary in an atmosphere of economic stagnation, high job losses, and scarce state resources. Yet, on balance, the compensation package seemed to them justified, even if it seemed excessive to the general public.

Gaining Perspective: Two Schools of Thought

For more than twenty years the trustees and faculty at UMass have fought over the question of power in presidential searches. The dispute is a modern one for the simple reason that only two decades ago, few people saw anything wrong with the trustees unilaterally selecting a president. Before Robert Wood's time, most faculty members accepted the premise that the appointment was the exclusive prerogative of the trustees. In the early 1970s, faculty and students challenged that premise and

sought to have a voice in university governance. In due course, the ideal of participatory democracy, as enshrined in the Wellman Report, became so universally accepted that most of them believed it was a reality. If the intensity of the dispute at UMass is unusual, the issues are essentially no different from those at other colleges and universities.

Borrowing from the field of contemporary political theory, I think it is helpful to analyze the recent controversy in the framework of the community power debate, which contrasts the "power elite" approach to the study of power with the alternative "pluralist" explanation. Those who take the elitist approach argue that there is a relatively permanent "top leadership" which decides the important questions, while the pluralists argue that any significant group in society has the capacity to win redress of its grievances if the group feels intensely about its problems and demands action. In a superficial way, each of these paradigms accurately describes many aspects of the recent search.

For example, the trustees, a small group of power holders, can be identified as a "power elite." In this case, the internal struggle for power centered primarily on the issue of process versus product. By changing their governance policy at the outset of the search, the trustees not only reasserted their appointing authority, but they also diminished the power of faculty and students. All things considered, they saw their appointment of Michael Hooker to be a judicious exercise of power in influencing the future direction of the university. Some of them saw the search as a catalytic event that marked a beginning of a resurgence for UMass.⁵⁴

Not everyone will agree with this conclusion, but the trustees so regarded it. In their eyes, Hooker was the right choice for the presidency. The inferences they drew suggest some of their reasons. They saw him as being ideally suited for the job. He not only met all their criteria, but he also symbolized consensus. As an added dividend, he happened to be a product of the UMass system. Clearly, as the intensity of the process built, the trustees considered outcome to be more important than process.

On the other side, many faculty took a diametrically different stand. They fervently believed that a "good process" would eventually produce a "good president." Within this analytic framework, they can be identified as "pluralists." As such, they wanted greater participation in the search, and on their terms. When they were denied their rights of shared governance, as defined in the Wellman Report, they saw the search process as being closed, secretive, undemocratic, not responsive to their concerns, and leaving large discretionary power in the hands of a relatively few well-placed people. Some faculty saw it as a rerun of the old-time old-boy network that characterized the efforts that produced Robert Wood as president in 1970. Other members of the university community saw the outcome as being politically predetermined. In their view, the trustees had acted in a unilateral manner and had come full cycle.

Citing classic American norms about participatory democracy and belief in the principles of the Wellman Report, one faculty colleague, who shall remain anonymous for obvious reasons, found that the Hooker search fell short of these ideals. He offered the following scathing critique:

What really happened in this search is that the Trustees decided to go out and get a new University President as quickly as possible, with as little internal

University consultation as possible, in as much secrecy as possible, and with no press scrutiny if it could possibly be avoided. And, in this context, they proceeded to violate the University's faculty contract and the state's open meeting law, as well as apparently ignoring serious ethical questions about their final selection (arising from his immediately previous position), and in the process nevertheless generated substantial negative publicity for the University and its new President. And the only way they got away with it was that the University faculty was so demoralized after previous battles that they just didn't want to put up enough effort to protect their legitimate interests.

This interpretation, for all its oversimplification and distortion of what transpired, has an element of truth in it. By operating in secret and not allowing campus visits by the candidates, the trustees left themselves wide open for criticism. The dispute over secrecy and publicity, along with the closed nature of the process, became central because it focused on a question of enduring significance about which it was impossible to reach a satisfactory resolution. The dispute was significant because it had important implications for the university's claim to democratic governance and the diverse nature of the overall system.

Indeed, it posed a classic dilemma, if not a conundrum, of how to maintain confidentiality while supposedly running an open operation in conformance with statutory requirements. Yet the issue could not be resolved, because to reveal the identities of the candidates was, for all practical purposes, to jeopardize their current positions. Newspapers in particular have complained bitterly about the denial of "the right to know," but it is not always clear whether this is the public's right to know what is going on or the newspaper's right to have access to all meetings and information.

If the group effort had a reasonable likelihood to succeed, the trustees were bound to antagonize some people, no matter what they did. The faculty were miffed because Dan Taylor had finessed them on the power question, and he did not consult with them in advance. Though he respected their professional judgment, he concluded that things would go better if the trustees consulted selectively. Some people felt that Taylor tried to have it both ways, reassuring faculty that he wanted their advice while ignoring their demands for greater participation. He understood the need to consult, but he also understood the need to lead.

Taylor was a capable chairman whose role cannot be overestimated. He orchestrated and carefully monitored the search process every step of the way. Taylor's leadership made all the participants feel that they were playing a significant part in the collective enterprise. He elicited trust and performed well. What is more, he did his homework. To be sure, he gave the search a real identity and strengthened that identity by putting people of stature on the search committee. Taylor's enthusiasm was infectious. Members felt that too. His relaxed manner and personal charm put them at ease. He was scrupulous in seeking advice. All accounts substantially agree on this.

Although the search committee was too large to function effectively, Taylor overcame this handicap by relying on a small group of key members. Yet the composition of the committee sent a clear signal that it was going to be a legitimate search. No insiders were going to have an inside track on an inside operation. At the same time, the prestige of the search committee provided sufficient political insulation to keep

the politicians at a safe distance and the search from becoming politicized. In some quarters that was feared. Naming four sitting college and university presidents to the committee was an innovation that gave credibility and judgment to the search. Faculty, however, tended to see the large committee as no more than a public relations gimmick, if not a front. In their minds, the small group that Taylor relied on diminished the representative nature of the full committee.

This brings us finally to the question of affirmative action. Despite the best of intentions, the efforts of the search committee left much to be desired. None of the four finalists, as noted, was a minority candidate. As one critic scornfully remarked, "It doesn't take a flaming liberal to wonder why the search committee was willing to go out of its way and to such lengths to reassure Hooker while letting a perceived negative climate for minorities go unanswered." Why did the eight minority applicants whom they contacted not show up among the finalists? No single explanation is satisfactory. In truth, only the candidates themselves can explain it to us.

Part of the answer, it seems to me, lies in the shallowness of the pool and the two discernible tiers that were established. It posed the dilemma of the "glass ceiling." When the search committee decided to limit the pool to the first tier, only white males (and one white female) at the top or in the corner office were likely to appear. If the pool is shallow, as it was in this case, what one gains in terms of quality one sacrifices in terms of equality and diversity. Another part of the answer had to do with their not considering anyone in the second tier, or at the dean level and below. This recruitment problem, I hasten to add, is not limited to the University of Massachusetts. It applies to all colleges and universities, public or private. This is especially true in the 1990s, when higher education in America is undergoing significant changes and the search for diverse leadership takes on new meaning and greater importance.

When all this is added up, the exercise serves as a reminder that, for thinking about presidential searches, the context of the Hooker search may be special, even unique, for it embodied a mixture of something old and something new. In differing ways, Taylor and his colleagues saw the search as a challenge but also as an opportunity. They did not shirk their duty, nor were they intimidated by the clamorous spectacle that had occurred a year earlier.

While it is true that they spotted their man early and went after him, it is also true that they were keenly aware of their choices and the type of leader they wanted. If any one feature of their work has to be singled out, it would be the clear way in which they defined the job profile. The formula was not a quick fix. More simply, the trustees had an overwhelming desire to settle on a permanent president. With the passing of time, we shall have a much better perspective and vantage point from which to judge the new chief executive and his administration. The trustees themselves suggest that it will take at least ten years' time "to reach the end of the beginning." Only then, of course, will we be able to tell whether or not this presidential search really made a difference. 🐼

Notes

1. As this issue of the *New England Journal of Public Policy* was going to press, president Michael Hooker was personally engaged in negotiations dealing with the problem of racism on

- the Amherst campus. For more on this, see Jean Caldwell, "UMass Head Set to Tackle Racism," *Boston Globe*, October 14, 1992.
2. Judith Block McLaughlin and David Riesman, *Choosing a College President: Opportunities and Constraints* (Princeton: Carnegie Foundation, 1990), 7.
3. Duane Lockard, *The Politics of State and Local Government* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 330–331.
4. For a journalistic account of the heavy toll that these budget cuts had taken and the organizational price paid, see Anthony Flint, "State Public College System Staggers amid Funding Cuts," *Boston Globe*, June 7, 1992.
5. See Barry Bluestone et al., *Commonwealth's Choice: Results from the Massachusetts Public Opinion Survey* (Boston: John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs, University of Massachusetts, January 1990).
6. McLaughlin and Riesman, *Choosing a College President*, xxvi.
7. Richard M. Freeland, *Academia's Golden Age: Universities in Massachusetts 1945–1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 345.
8. For a detailed discussion and in-depth analysis of these five presidential searches, see Richard A. Hogarty, "Searching for a UMass President: Transitions and Leaderships, 1970–1992," *New England Journal of Public Policy* 7, no. 2 (Fall–Winter 1991): 9–45. Chairman Daniel Taylor made this article required reading for all members of the UMass presidential search committee.
9. McLaughlin and Riesman, *Choosing a College President*, xxviii.
10. Interview with Gordon Oakes, chairman of the UMass board of trustees, July 6, 1992.
11. Interview with trustee Daniel Taylor, June 15, 1992. By way of academic background, Taylor graduated from the University of Illinois and obtained a master's degree in political science at the University of California at Berkeley and a law degree from Harvard University.
12. Interview with faculty member Charles Knight, July 23, 1992.
13. Interview with faculty member Paul Tucker, July 28, 1992.
14. See memorandum of the UMass board of trustees, "Charge to the Committee," December 4, 1991.
15. Ronald Story, "Our Present Ordeal: A Historical Note," June 16, 1991. See also "Summary Report: The IASH Seminar on the Story Analysis," December 1991.
16. Interview with trustee Daniel Taylor, June 15, 1992.
17. Minutes of the UMass presidential search committee, January 21, 1992.
18. Interview with faculty member Ronald Story, June 19, 1992.
19. Interview with trustee Michael Foley, June 22, 1992.
20. Interview with search consultant Ronald Stead, June 25, 1992.
21. Memorandum from search consultants Ronald Stead and Allan Ostar to trustee Daniel Taylor, March 17, 1992.
22. Interview with trustee Daniel Taylor, June 15, 1992.
23. See the final version of the "Announcement," March 1992.
24. A transcript of the proceedings of the Fifth Annual Public Affairs Seminar sponsored by the John W. McCormack Institute on the topic "Rx for Recovery: Planned Growth in a Protected Environment" (Boston: University of Massachusetts, March 1992), 66.
25. Report of the compensation subcommittee, "Recommendations on Compensation and Professional Relationship with the New President," April 1, 1992, 2.

26. Ibid.
27. Interview with faculty member John Russell, July 8, 1992.
28. Daniel Taylor, "Report of the President, Search Committee," May 19, 1992.
29. Minutes of the UMass presidential search committee, April 6, 1992.
30. Curriculum vitae of Michael Kenneth Hooker, 2. For an interesting profile of Hooker, see Rushworth M. Kidder, "Special Report: Agenda 2000," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 25, 1988.
31. Interview with faculty member Miren Uriarte, June 27, 1992.
32. Minutes of the UMass presidential search committee, May 6, 1992.
33. Minutes of the UMass presidential search committee, May 12, 1992.
34. For more on this, see Gregory Dees and Cecily Harshmand, "Bennington College: Managing A Crisis," Yale School of Management, 1986.
35. For more on this, see Freeman A. Hrabowski and James J. Links, "The Metropolitan University and the Community College: A New Symbiosis," *Metropolitan Universities 2* (Spring 1992): 71-79.
36. Dan Currie, "Hooker Named President," *Mass Media*, June 2, 1992.
37. Interview with president-elect Michael Hooker, July 8, 1992.
38. Ibid.
39. Interview with trustee Mary Reed, May 30, 1992.
40. Interview with president-elect Michael Hooker, July 8, 1992.
41. Interview with trustee James O'Leary, July 7, 1992.
42. Interviews with UMass/Amherst chancellor Richard O'Brien, September 29, 1992, and UMass/Boston chancellor Sherry Penney, June 10, 1992.
43. Interview with faculty member Paul Tucker, July 28, 1992.
44. Anthony Flint, "UMass Trustees to Name New President Today," *Boston Globe*, May 27, 1992.
45. Interview with trustee Joseph Finnerty, June 23, 1992.
46. Ibid.
47. Interview with faculty member Ronald Story, June 17, 1992.
48. Anthony Flint, "New President at UMass to Focus on Rebuilding Confidence in School," *Boston Globe*, May 28, 1992.
49. Ibid.
50. Minutes of the special meeting of the UMass board of trustees, May 27, 1992.
51. Ibid.
52. Frank Phillips, "UMass Trustees to Pay New President \$175,000," *Boston Globe*, August 19, 1992. See also Frank Phillips, "New UMass Head Gets Free Luxury Housing," *Boston Globe*, August 22, 1992; "UMass Pay Sends Sour Message," *Patriot-Ledger*, August 20, 1992; and "Pampering President Hooker," *Boston Herald*, August 26, 1992.
53. See, for example, the letter to the editor of the *Boston Globe*, September 20, 1992, written by Professor Martin H. Quitt, who teaches history at UMass/Boston.
54. Interviews with trustee Peter Lewenberg, June 26, 1992, and trustee Alan Solomont, July 9, 1992.

The Legacies of Deindustrialization and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

Douglas M. Reynolds

Creation of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and release of a master plan for cultural and physical resource development is creating a new standard for private, local, state, and federal partnerships. Actions by the Corridor's partners are shaped by both past and contemporary economic development issues. Using tools of humanistic inquiry — history, economics, preservation, sociology, political science — for social and economic purposes signifies far-reaching shifts and possibilities for public planning and policy philosophies in both public and private agencies.

Partners in the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, created in 1986 as an affiliate of the National Park Service, are attempting to preserve the historical and cultural fabric of a premier American industrial region. The law creating and defining the Corridor charged a guiding commission with the responsibility of “provid[ing] a management framework to assist the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island and their units of local government in the development and implementation of integrated cultural, historical, and land resource management programs in order to retain, enhance and interpret the significant [resources] . . . of the Corridor.”¹

The Corridor Commission, then, is charged with the responsibility of finding and implementing strategies that socially and economically could enhance the Blackstone Valley's material future by protecting its past. The multiple partnerships — between the federal government, two states, a score of communities, and a wide variety of interest groups — combined with the publication of the Corridor Commission's *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan* to mark a turning point in the evolution of public policy planning. This article, by examining history and preservation as an

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example of a larger process, explores some of the tensions and hopes associated with such turning points.

Formative Forces

For an area that received considerable attention as the “cradle of the industrial revolution,” the forty-six miles of Blackstone Valley running south from Worcester, Massachusetts, to Providence, Rhode Island, also deserves serious historical attention as a cradle of deindustrialization. Indeed, economic historian Bill Hartford has found a long and substantial process of textile mill flight from New England communities beginning in the 1890s, eighty years before Detroit worried about cheap labor from Tokyo or Tokyo worried about cheap labor from Seoul.²

From 1920 to the present, textiles and related industries in the valley have suffered more bad years than good. The nadirs of textile and textile machine building production in the valley peaked twice in the years following World War I. The first was from 1922 to 1925; the second, a generation later, was associated with World War II, when plant expansion and market demand both reached new all-time highs. All told, these were only brief explosions of tremendous impact. Almost all the remaining years, however, saw long-term stagnation or decline in the industry.

Plant closings, plant flight, work-force cutbacks, and associated business closings appear to us then as the more persistent and typical situation in the Blackstone Valley during the last century. Deindustrialization, for its longevity, is therefore also an extraordinarily complex phenomenon. The usual reason proffered to explain such problems — that unions drove wages and other costs up so high as to make it impossible for employers to operate — is only a minor part of the story. As it turns out, textile mill owners left well before, during, and after the arrival and decline of organized labor. More correctly, short-term business policy and capital flight can be blamed for economic problems in the valley’s social and cultural history.³

There is no doubt that deindustrialization in the Blackstone has had its negative effects. *Ocean State Business*, a periodical whose mission is to speak well of the business community, enumerated some modern, worrisome statistics. In 1980, and today, median family income in Central Falls was the lowest among Rhode Island’s thirty-nine communities. Woonsocket was thirty-seventh and Pawtucket was thirty-fifth. These three cities also had the lowest per capita high school diploma ratios in the state. On the other hand, the rural towns of the valley — and this holds true for most of the Massachusetts half as well — remained better off, had the biggest housing booms, and experienced increased per capita incomes that exceeded the state average.⁴

Nevertheless, suburbanizing bedroom communities, like Lincoln and North Smithfield, Rhode Island, and Grafton and Millbury, Massachusetts, are reaching per capita levels of education and income that exceed state averages. These wages, though, are earned by the 40 to 70 percent — depending on the community — of residents who commute to jobs outside the valley. Residents with long working-class family roots face higher rents, lower job prospects, and little access to exterior job markets. Thus the evolution of a two-class society continues in the Blackstone Valley, as it does elsewhere in the United States.⁵ A resurgence of militant unionism for remaining jobs is a benign question.

It is important to place matters in historical perspective: since the days of Samuel Slater, Blackstone Valley textile workers have been nonunionized far more often than unionized, and historically earned only one-half to three-quarters the wages of textile workers elsewhere in New England. Two series of oral history interviews, one in the mid-1970s and a second in the late 1980s, proved that the golden age of textiles in the Blackstone Valley, like the period of deindustrialization since 1923, was far more effervescent for mill owners than for mill workers.⁶

Indeed, wages in the textile industry were never very good, and the security that paternalistic mill owners once provided was long gone before the advent of Franklin D. Roosevelt's welfare state.⁷ The impact of World War II and the ensuing prosperity helped create an atomized society that precluded the re-creation of "the good old days" for mill owners, mill workers, and mill communities. The greatest loss was that sense of neighborhood and community mill workers had enjoyed. However, workers more often than not recognized the pervasive materialism that replaced the close and warm relationships of mill life. Recognizing that atomization would be the direct result of enhanced standards of living and confrontational collective bargaining, workers consciously chose it when they joined and organized unions, and few regretted it. The materialism that they and their children enjoy is something they do not want to lose.⁸

The liberal era and the advent of unionism in the industry after World War II helped workers become more secure, comfortable, and happy, whereupon they joined, not surprisingly, the comfortable and conservative majority. This reflected the shifting of community burden from 1920s corporate paternalism and its 1930s failure to the New Deal security of the welfare state. Nothing was less predicted, as John Kenneth Galbraith pointed out, but nothing, in retrospect, was less predictable.⁹ Class violence and an array of political "isms" made periodic and substantial visits to the valley in the 1880s, after World War I, and in the Great Depression. Their sometimes radicalized nature brought social movements, like that of 1934, to open class warfare.¹⁰

At a broad level, these upheavals and resolutions came to mean that our governments — local, state, and federal — became agents of confidence. It means that where once Blackstone Valley mill owners subsidized our communities, our communities now subsidize mill owners. For individuals seeking to "collect" and institutions in trouble, like Stanley Woolen of Uxbridge, this became American socialism, which Galbraith went on to identify as the failed child of American capitalism.¹¹

The Intellectuals' Response

There is on the surface little reason to join the ranks of the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, or other vested publications that see the information/service age in the United States as a force which can afford to jettison manufacturing simply as an icon of history. Microcomputer, biotech, and other new-age industries have failed to make a significant socioeconomic impact in the valley. Yet the view of historical forces as irreversible (but not deterministic) is worthy of consideration and offers us, if we stop to consider it, the proposition that the future is malleable and that a wide array of choices is available.¹²

If we are to believe, for example, in industrialization as a transforming force worthy of the title "revolutionary," we must also look at deindustrialization as a transforming force that holds revolutionary potential in undermining or making socially useful the jobs which industrial workers, their communities, their work cultures, and their children will come to find in deindustrializing areas, and in re-aligning the two-class society so increasingly clear in the valley today.

In this vein, for example, such proponents of wage parity and comparable worth programs as Harvard economist Juliet Schor have effectively argued that it may not be a bad thing when the factory closes and the service industries spring up. Schor's argument is that male "mavens of manufacturing" base their remorse for the loss of industry on the loss of high-wage, blue-collar, male jobs. Where sexists see female workers to be the problem, Schor and other feminists, for good reason, see female wages to be the problem. Sex discrimination is cause to distrust the rise of female-dominated service industries, and vice versa.¹³

Robert Reich and other market-based liberal economists would not disagree, though in a generalized liberal male's interpretation sexism is a component of, rather than central to, the need for statist intervention. In the liberal spin-off from human capital theory, which says a worker will earn wages comparable to the individual's self-investment (by way of education, training, and other tangible self-improvements), Reich calls for government investment in society, as much as in self, to produce an intrinsically more civilized and gender neutral culture. The logic, spelled out at Governor Michael Dukakis's Economic Summit on January 19, 1990, calls for investment in New England's infrastructure and humanist programs such as education in order to continue both growth and prosperity. The result, in this view, is that high "value added" jobs will come to or remain in New England because of its solid infrastructure and wonderful minds.

The implication, depending on the interpreter, is that more computer scientists, biological engineers, or other male-dominated, high-tech, professional jobs are needed, and that nurses, teachers, and other sexually segregated professionals should be regarded as underpaid professionals worthy of a higher wage. In either case, unavailable or underfunded, these are perceived to be those "good jobs at high wages" so common in political pundits' verbiage.

Theory into Practice

In textile and other former industrial regions, development questions rarely turn on value-added or gender concerns. Economic development questions posed by workers or work scholars often boil down, in many ways, to "Which of these jobs are exportable and which are not?" The creation of nonexportable, high-value-added jobs can come from two sources. The first is a greater appreciation, and higher wages for, those jobs which better us as a civilization. Teaching, nursing, and the other "nurturing" industries are obvious examples, and wage parity cases raise a host of others, including clerical, information processing, and broader aspects of the health care industry. The second source is the restructuring of male-dominated labor market segments, like engineering and the sciences, to better accommodate day care and other needs.¹⁴

No one has ever argued that the potential for greater job market equality lies in a greater opportunity for exploitation; it is, after all, the male-dominated segments that remain the most exportable. Those jobs which make us better as a society and culture — the arts and humanities as well as health care and scientific research — are less often exportable, though Harvard, Brown, Cornell, and Yale unionists may believe their institutions are willing to attempt at least preliminary exploration of the potential for off-shore production.

The Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan

Economic development is one of five central components of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission's *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan*, approved by the two states' governors and the secretary of the interior in 1989. Other central components are historic preservation, interpretation, environmental conservation, and land use management. The plan calls for each of these areas to be pursued as fully as possible, where the Corridor Commission works, by coordinated, linked actions designed to achieve the maximum effect in each area. Thus, a proposed labor and ethnic museum in Woonsocket, for example, is part of a larger Main Street program, an urban park program, canoe put-ins along the river, and regional planning for bicycle paths and a greenway program. Other such complex examples exist the length of the Corridor.

The *Plan* calls for such coordinated, linked actions because possibilities appear to be so extensive and because the region is so large. The Corridor Commission seeks the greatest possible impact from its projects, including "good jobs at good wages," because it wants to serve as a model both for good development and for imaginative planning. Past political and economic neglect and a fear of the future by local business and community leaders are hard to overcome, after all, without either good models or imaginative planning. Hard-hit urban areas like Central Falls, Rhode Island, seem willing to pursue any number of revenue sources, including prisons, trash incinerators, and other industries deemed detestable elsewhere, simply to stay afloat. Even some of the valley's comparatively affluent, relatively rural bedroom communities, like Uxbridge, Massachusetts, have expressed a desire for "development at any cost," because of the shattered mill legacy. Bitter development battles in Uxbridge pit the "newcomer-environmentalist" against the children and peers of former mill workers who have supported race tracks, airports, power plants, and other sometimes questionable development proposals. The arguments turn on all-or-nothing propositions in which compromise is rarely possible.

The Corridor Commission's Plan recognizes the mediation or nonconfrontational opportunities in linked components. Historic preservation issues, for example, embraced by both sides of the development battle, are seen as a cutting edge technique for both economic and cultural development. Once the valley's worst assets — thousands of unemployed workers and hundreds of closed mills, with little interest or support for either coming from Rhode Island or Massachusetts — the legacy of deindustrialization is touted as "the valley's special character." This legacy includes what are in essence nineteenth-century mill villages, farms and market towns, and both small and ponderous mills in rural and urban areas. Thousands of structures and sweeping landscapes representing the complexity and diversity of the industrial

revolution and resulting economic and social relationships still exist. The effect offers an idyllic opportunity for academic study as well as an emotional evocation of America's pastoral myth, what Leo Marx called the "Machine in the Garden."¹⁵

These resources are, however, threatened by the suburbanization and social malaise that has erased the character and resources of other New England communities, including those born and bred on the "Rhode Island" system of mill village relationships. An imminent surge of haphazard sprawl in the form of strip malls, condominiums, large-lot housing developments, and ever widening and lengthening pavement is likely to engulf the valley character in the next ten years. Both newcomers and heirs of the mill legacy want to preserve their communities because the existing built landscapes recall both a tradition of human activity that appeals to traditional working-class residents, and to the nineteenth-century patterns of open space, and vital village centers that appeal to the preservationist instincts of more recent valley arrivals.

In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, John Ruskin wrote that "the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, or in its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity."¹⁶ This, preservation supporters and detractors alike agree, is what makes the valley special today.

Ruskin's statement, that preservationists ultimately pursue their goals in order to better understand washing waves of humanity, places the efforts of historians and preservationists in a liberal alliance that seeks cultural as well as economic well-being. If symbols differ — from the structure for preservationists to the written word for the historian — it is only in form. There is in fact much that preservation and history have to offer each other. As Ruskin went on to say, a building is a "lasting witness against men . . . its existence, more lasting as it is than that of the natural objects of the world around it, can be gifted with . . . language and of life."¹⁷

The preservation movement alone has largely failed to reach for historical embodiment, as Ruskin desired in 1907. But the creation of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor does embody the consummation of a marriage of disciplines for new and different social and economic purposes. Funding comes from both Rhode Island and Massachusetts as well as the federal government. The Corridor, an affiliate of the National Park Service, does not own land, nor does the legislation creating it provide it any regulatory control. But it does represent the federal government's willingness to coordinate the efforts and development of twenty communities in two states for a range of cultural as well as environmental and economic purposes.¹⁸

The Corridor therefore represents an interdisciplinary ground floor and cutting edge of several primary policy shifts, which will certainly grow in the 1990s. An industrial-oriented response to the damage done by plant closings is implicitly on the agenda as a forward-looking response based on a suitably backward event: de-industrialization. The question here is Can the Corridor Commission revitalize threatened communities by building on current practices and debates? Or can the Corridor concept even break new ground for government's involvement in local, regional, and federal policy planning? Its ambitious *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan*, after all, has to be implemented.

Another aspect of this ambition reflects the National Park Service's attempts to move into the preservation and protection of cultural and physical resources. The Park Service, charged with the mission of protecting the nation's resources, can no longer simply purchase and manage mountains and other natural resources as it has in years past. The huge Alaskan land acquisitions of the 1970s, and appointment of disassemblers under President Ronald Reagan, in fact spelled the end of the Park Service's acquisitive spirit. Similarly, the "cannonball" mentality of those who traditionally protected the nation's significant historical resources has been challenged by social and other historians for more than a generation. This challenge is finally making headway in places like Lowell, where the everyday rather than the exceptional has been rendered significant.

Blackstone Valley committed bureaucrats are not expanding Park Service influence so much as sharing its expertise for urban and rural locations. This redirection accommodates both Republican and Democratic ideologies. Already historically important, the rural-urban mix of the Blackstone Valley provides a good transition point from which to carry on both the Lowell and Acadia National Park experiences.

Another area of change is the pursuit of public-private partnerships for economic and humanistic development in deindustrializing areas. More than simple consultation with local chambers of commerce, the Corridor's efforts represent the establishment of consensus-seeking agendas and the provision of technical assistance to everything from pollution control to education, to housing and business growth, for cultural reasons. Attempting to maintain the area's architectural integrity is perhaps the most publicly visible of these efforts, but the political and cultural ramifications reach into the human structures as well.¹⁹

A third area is represented by the multidisciplinary intellectual energy necessary to pursue this work. A concern for current labor, economic, and business historiography is mixing with debates about cluster zoning, community-friendly industrial development, ecological balance and greenways, education, and a dozen other topics and disciplines. The lessons of ivory tower disciplines and practical needs are simultaneous, overlapping, and present in application. If nothing else, the corridor concept represents a renaissance (as opposed to a jack-of-all-trades) approach to preservation and development.

Perhaps most important, the advent of the Corridor and the Corridor Commission's *Cultural Land Use and Management Plan* bespeaks the arrival of an American culture that is educational, informed, and forward as well as backward looking. Japanese criticism of American business practices tends to focus on the lack of long-term commitment to planning use for social and physical resources, a critique provided by Blackstone residents at least since 1904, when mill managers tore down one mill and built a second mill a hundred yards away, across the state line, to punish a community for not granting them a tax break.²⁰ Yet the business community's recent embrace of preservation (and environmental) issues runs beyond the IBM philosophy that it will go only where IBM managers want to live. One of the curious legacies of the Reagan administration is, after all, a pride in both place and purpose.

Being in on the ground floor of creating educational, cultural, and economic development and other policies with dozens of partners is stimulating. One of the reasons for common cause between residents with different political and economic

interests is the newness, for example, of both modern preservation and historical research in the Blackstone Valley. Many residents are not sure what structures or histories are important. If the Corridor Commission does not remain sensitive to the interests of all, it will be condemned as trivialist, romantic, or even destructive.²¹ On the other hand, the Corridor Commission is in many ways the new kid on the block. It has the opportunity to define what is important, but suffers, like other government agencies, from widespread "What are you going to do for me?" demands instead of the partnerships that Congress and the Corridor Commission's *Plan* called for through mutual asking of "Will you join us in . . . ?"

Many of us have felt from time to time that preservationists and historians, environmentalists and planners, labor and management, and other sometimes conflicting groups are mostly wandering in the dark. Do we really know, to stick with the preservation example, which structures — mill owners' mansions, the mills themselves, railroad bridges, aqueducts, workers' housing, the Blackstone Canal, or even open spaces — are worth preserving? After all, in the process of making choices, superimposed values are brought to the task. Should Slater Mill, for example, be preserved because of the unique contributions Samuel Slater made to the history of technology in the New World? Superficially, the obvious answer is yes. But why is the history of technology important to us? What did that technology do? Shouldn't Slater Mill be preserved not for the machinery it housed but for the importance of, say, learning the lessons of child labor in Rhode Island? Was not Slater's management model, which provided the management basis for much of American manufacturing, even more important? Should we show people the tools of exploitation when learning the lessons of the exploited can be so much more valuable for us because, finally, are not the lessons of those washing waves of humanity more important to us?

In a review of the history of preservation, Adele Chatfield-Taylor tied the growth and development of her field, and with it some of these problems, to concepts of time: Heinrich Schliemann's Mycenaen excavations lead us to understand that Homer's poems had been about a Troy that actually existed, that Proust showed us "a minute could be six volumes sliced vertically instead of horizontally," something akin to a Picasso painting, and that Darwin's theories on human evolution placed man himself only as a part of a larger whole, perhaps only as a very minor part.²²

Ultimately, of course, Chatfield-Taylor came to Einstein, who showed us that time, place, and matter are nothing without one another, and there exists the possibility that they can be rearranged. Implicit in her thoughts is the idea that both our rapidly changing world and the threat of total destruction at the hands nuclear weapons have given life to preservation. Einstein's theories and local plant closings both force us to seek shelter, like threatened beasts, in familiar terrain where somehow remembrance of the "good old days" can make our futures safe.²³

Using a vision of past days, no matter how inaccurate, as a way to secure the future is a position articulated by both sides of the development debate. The strongest proponents of new industrial development remain the petit bourgeois lawyers, real estate brokers, and storekeepers who were weaned on the now dislocated mill-village relationship. They share a Hamiltonian belief in centralized control and laissez-faire efficiency that is reminiscent of the unshared power expressed by mill owners in an earlier day. Their philosophy is usually expressed in a single property tax rate for both residential and business owners and by support for the ideology of Massachu-

setts's Proposition 2½, which freezes tax increases at a time when federal and state services are being cut.

The most vocal opponents of industrial or large-scale retail development are people who were never exposed to that special mill-village relationship once prevalent in the valley or managed to escape its influence by leaving the valley and returning after exposure to alternative jobs and lifestyles. College educated, commuting to jobs outside the valley, and big believers in a Jeffersonian, pastoral vision of the area to which they moved, they came to raise families in as idyllic a location as they could find within a reasonable commute.²⁴

I mention Chatfield-Taylor's fascination with time for several reasons. Labor historians are amused by the historical positions taken in various arguments over the need for development and preservation. They too have been taken by evolving concepts of time. The most obvious example is the shift from task-oriented work ruled by the seasons of the sun, or the chores of the day, associated with agriculture, to the introduction of time clocks and hourly wage work, and ultimately union contracts and regulatory legislation, to guide production. The latter are as much a part of the cultural legacy of the valley as French-Canadian ethnicity or the Italian immigrants' role in the IWW strike at Hopedale in 1913. The concepts, like the people, dwelled in the villages and structures that historical and preservation societies are seeking to protect. For Chatfield-Taylor and other preservationists, time is an external danger. For many labor historians, it is an internalized consciousness made most readily apparent in naked class struggle.²⁵

In the end, however, the external and internal are directly related. If public and private groups can take responsibility for our past, the logic runs, they must also be able to shape the future. This Janus-faced ideology bespeaks something that members of long-existing cultures have known for some time: history itself can produce a cultural legacy worthy of building upon. Such pride in place also takes the survivalist's refuge in familiar territory, defensively hoping that history, and our buildings, can be turned against what in more pessimistic moments is seen as the mortality of our society.

It is no accident that the great milestones of preservation history — the Antiquities Act of 1906, the Historic Sites Act of 1935, and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 — all came into being precisely at the height of the larger social reform movements of Progressivism, the New Deal, and the War on Poverty. In each of these periods — all viewed as times of danger and upheaval — Americans sought to challenge the direction and results of contemporary practice in favor of a better future. In each of these periods, goals consisted of simultaneous protection of what we perceived to be good and using this good as a foundation for building a society that could be made better. These were, above all, activist eras and, like the American Revolution itself, involved a vocal and resolute minority.

The importance of the relationship between preservation and activism ultimately came to more permanent fruition in the Tax Reform Act of 1976, partly as a result of bicentennial emotionalism, but also as a part of preservation's unique passage into maturity. The use of tax incentives for preservation and development signifies acceptance of the status quo, and preservation's advent in directions like the National Heritage Corridor in the Reagan years bespeaks a permanent if unexpected place in American society. For the first time, a generation of American citizens is truly attempting to point to a national cultural tradition — one which encompasses women

and a broad range of ethnic groups as well as the white male American working class — worth preserving rather than simply exploiting or tearing down. The tremendous turnaround experienced by Lowell simply because of preservation and historical interest is unprecedented.

The preservation of former factories and workers' tenements, of industrial landscapes and open space, in the Blackstone Valley, further points not toward a continuation of "great white male" historical pursuits, but of an industrial legacy and multiethnic wage labor force, including children, that was typically 40 to 50 percent female. This is more than simply inclusive history; it is history pursued and used for social and educational as well as economic betterment. Never mind that the highest appropriation ever given to preservation agencies was only \$60 million,²⁶ or that the National Heritage Corridor's budget is minuscule even by National Park Service standards.²⁷ The community-oriented shift undertaken by preservationists and ivory tower intellectuals in partnership parks, as in the Blackstone Valley, has been more than worth the price of admission.

In the 1980s, Blackstone Valley developers for the first time began to consult preservationists, without being ordered to do so by a judge, for information and out of sensitivity.²⁸ And for the first time, local, state, and even a few federal politicians were forced to both undertake and understand preservation, usually in that order. Historians, too, are beginning to approach preservation as something more than an objective pursued by well-to-do, well-meaning antiquarians. Professional jobs are available for serious historians and preservationists, whose work is taken seriously. Quite frankly, there is little as pleasing as feeling needed.

Yet the opportunities and responsibilities in the Blackstone Valley are also so great as to be almost incomprehensible, and certainly beyond the full understanding of any single individual. This vacuum demands that organizations like the Pawtucket Preservation Society provide the glory, watching, and judgments that John Ruskin called for. This vacuum demands, in the context of the 1976 Preservation Tax Act, that policymakers and other analysts force Corridor Commission and other officials to listen and respond to a wide variety of concerns and efforts. The Corridor asks that policymakers too become not just a reactive or political voice, but also undertake an educational mission so that the developers of strip malls, redundant housing, and pollutive industrial concerns — those most able to threaten preservation efforts — as well as children who will be tomorrow's community leaders, become its most vocal supporters.

The Corridor Commission lacks the legal authority to will its desire. Regulatory enforcement was not the intent of the legislation that created it. But the Corridor also lacks the methods to pursue everything that needs to be accomplished. Many policymakers are already aware of the enormity of the tasks in individual New England communities. Both Corridor Commission personnel and corridor partners must address open space and new development issues and learn about the local sources and effects of pollution, housing tensions, transportation problems, park development, and other issues.

Each state's Department of Environmental Management has proposed the creation of visitors' centers that deal with a different theme in the valley's history. In Rhode Island these are to consist of improving the technological base and interpretive tours and exhibits at Slater Mill Historic Site in Pawtucket. The city of Woonsocket, moving forward as fast and as thoroughly as any group in the Corridor, will be

renovating the historic Market Square area. The heart of this project will be a rehabilitation of the Falls Yarn Mill building for mixed use, including a visitors' center emphasizing the valley's labor and ethnicity. The city is working closely with business groups and with state and federal officials in the type of partnerships the Corridor encourages.

These themes — technology, ethnicity, labor, as well as agriculture and urbanization — are among those which make the Blackstone Valley a historically significant place and its buildings worth preserving. They give the valley its highly aesthetic character and make it a working region where people continue to live. The almost completely preserved mill villages, like Ashton, Mannville, Hopedale, and others *are* unique in the nation. The social relations between mill owners and workers are still reflected in these structures and are equally significant for their place in U.S. social history. If the fact that none of this ever happened in Omaha is not important to some property owners or politicians, the fact that large portions of an often bucolic region could soon look like northern New Jersey is.

Hundreds of structures and sites stand as strong physical evidence of the valley's history and significance and contribute to its character. Consequently, it is the Corridor Commission's objective to develop a public committed to historic preservation. After years of neglect by industry and society, valley residents must be encouraged to appreciate that their architecture is special, that, for example, their mill housing really belongs on a National Register of Historic Places.

Perhaps the epitome of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's efforts in this direction is the acquisition of the Kelly House, mill site, and open space along the river and canal near Quinnville. Being developed as a park, complete with bicycle and walking paths in addition to historical exhibits, brochures, and other materials, the site lies in the shadow of a huge historic mill, mill housing, a beautiful viaduct, and a dam for mill power. The Blackstone Canal, with tow path intact, slices through the middle of the site. The railroad that replaced the canal is visible across the river, and an open spandrel-arched bridge carrying Route 116, rides 116 feet above the site. The Kelly site is being developed not only because of canoeists' passion for this beautiful stretch of river, but because it represents, culturally and economically, what is best and unique about Rhode Island historically and in the present.

The Corridor Commission intends to continue its inventory of historic sites, structures, and archaeological resources, preserving key historic districts, properties, and areas that define the character of the Blackstone Valley. It does not intend to place the entire valley behind a velvet rope, as at a museum, but it does plan to encourage the development of a region inhabited by educated and sensitive people whose focus and energies are vital to simultaneous growth and preservation. The Corridor Commission's master plan also calls for identifying properties threatened by development pressures, deterioration, and inadequate resources.

The Corridor Commission plans to focus on strategies that can achieve these goals. Obviously, a number of options are open, including the use of historic easements, adaptive reuse, program assistance, matching grants, marketing strategy, evaluation of interpretive programs, assistance in training guides, assessment of management alternatives, negotiations with owners, and acquisition of development rights. We can also work with local organizations, including governments, to gain listing on national and state registers of historic places for those which meet criteria.

assist in establishing districts and zoning plans that remain sensitive to history, and bringing tax incentives and other existing tools to light for use by developers.

In addition, we can create or help create new target programs, including loan, assistance, or grants, for existing structures and areas. Perhaps most important, the Corridor Commission is working with local historic commissions and societies, as well as business groups, to better define specific goals and strategies for the overall planning of simultaneous preservation and development efforts. Where and how far all this gets, like so much else in public policy, remains open to question. But the current prospects are new and bright. The Corridor is already a model for proposed similar projects across the nation. Following the prospects as they develop in New England should be constructive. ■

Notes

1. Ninety-ninth Cong., 100 Stat. 3625, Public Law 99-647, November 10, 1986.
2. Bill Hartford, "Unions, Labor Markets, and Deindustrialization," 1, paper presented at the Massachusetts Symposium on Labor History, Westfield State College, March 1989.
3. John Mullin, "From Mill Town to Mill Town," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 52, no. 1 (Winter 1986): 47-58.
4. "Northern Rhode Island: An Economic Profile," *Ocean State Business* 6, no. 12 (April 10-23, 1989): 12-13; Labor Research Center, University of Rhode Island, "Executive Summaries of Labor Resources and the Rhode Island Economy" (Kingston, 1992), 15. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the *Providence Journal* reported in 1989 that, nationwide, more than 300,000 textile workers lost their jobs between 1980 and 1988. In 1989, 1,800 workers lost jobs at Health-tex in Pawtucket alone. Since then, textile and related employment in Rhode Island declined by an estimated 8,000 jobs. *Providence Journal*, June 2, 1989; Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training, "Rhode Island Establishment Employment Calendar Years 1990-June 1992" (Providence, unpublished data, 1992).
5. "Northern Rhode Island," 13.
6. See 175 oral history interviews in the Rhode Island Mill Life Oral History Collection (conducted 1971-1976), Department of Special Collections, Main Library, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, and approximately 180 interviews in the Shifting Gears Oral History Project (conducted 1988-1990), sponsored by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, housed at the Center for Lowell History, University of Lowell.
7. See Nancy Frances Kane, *Textiles in Transition: Technology, Wages, and Industry Relocation in the U.S. Textile Industry, 1880-1930* (Westport, Conn.: 1988), and Alice Galenson, "The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry to the South," Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1975. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reports that in 1989 more than 5 million American households were headed by people who work full time, year round, and live in poverty. That figure has grown by 20 percent since 1980 and moved us back to that era moments before the advent of the Great Depression when Blackstone Valley mills were already in trouble. See *Providence Journal*, June 2, 1989; Thomas Navin, *The Whittin Machine Works Since 1831* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 356.
8. I conducted the following oral history interviews for the Shifting Gears program: in Uxbridge, with Steve Jezierski, March 1989, and with Ralph Borden, May 1989; in Lincoln and North Smithfield, with Mary LaFerrier, February 1989, and Amy Langolois, May 1989, respectively.
9. Galbraith quoted in the *Boston Globe*, March 25, 1989.
10. See, for example, Gary Gerstle, *Working Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Gary Kulik, "Textile Mill Labor in the Blackstone Valley: Work and Protest in the 19th Century," paper presented at the

- Woonsocket Labor and Ethnic History Symposium, "The Hardest Working River: The Blackstone's Legacy," Woonsocket, June 10, 1989; Gerstle, "The Mobilization of the Working Class Community: The Independent Textile Union in Woonsocket, 1931–1946," in *Radical History Review* 17 (Spring 1978): 161–172; Adena Myers, "Rhode Island Women in the 1934 General Textile Strike," in Douglas M. Reynolds and Marjory Myers, eds., *Working in the Blackstone River Valley: Exploring the Heritage of Industrialization* (Providence Labor History Society, 1991), 165–176.
11. *Boston Globe*, March 25, 1989.
 12. *Forbes*, April 11, 1983, 149; "Steel Collar Workers: Lessons from Japan," *Wall Street Journal*, February 16, 1982.
 13. Juliet Schor, "Art of Service," *Zeta Magazine*, December 1988, 43–46.
 14. Alice Kessler-Harris, "Can We Control Our Economic Destiny?" paper presented at the conference "Shifting Gears: The Changing Meaning of Work," Worcester Polytechnic Institute, November 18, 1989.
 15. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), passim.
 16. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1913), 191.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. Some current corridor agenda items, either by watchfulness, support, or direct action, include the development of a Route 146–Mass Turnpike interchange, waste pretreatment facilities and combined storm-sewer problems, greenway development, a Providence–Worcester bikeway, implementation of cluster zoning, and overlay by-laws, historic interpretation, curriculum development, and adaptive reuse of historic structures including barns, mills, and department stores as well as preservation.
 19. Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor* (Uxbridge: Corridor Commission, 1989), 40–46.
 20. The Blackstone Manufacturing Company case is documented in business and town correspondence held by the Blackstone Historic Commission. North Smithfield, Rhode Island, was the beneficiary of the move.
 21. No synthesis of Blackstone Valley history exists. A number of completed scholarly works relating to the valley and the Rhode Island system of labor exist. These include Rick Greenwood's unpublished "History of the Blackstone Canal," written for the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and his "Zachariah Allen and the Architecture of Industrial Paternalism," in *Rhode Island History* 64, no. 4 (November 1988). Jonathan Prude's *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts* (Cambridge, 1983) is an important and influential study of Samuel Slater's largest undertakings at Oxford, Dudley, and Webster, Massachusetts. This work, though it largely omits Slater's equally significant undertakings at Slatersville, Rhode Island, is crucial for understanding the historic context and nature of the Rhode Island system of management. Also see James Garner, *The Model Company Town* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), on Hopedale; Louise Lamphere, *From Working Daughters to Working Mothers: Immigrant Women in a New England Community* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), on Central Falls; and Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), on Worcester. The best thematic overview of the valley's history, Reynolds and Myers, *Working in the Blackstone River Valley*, focuses on labor and industry.
 22. Adele Chatfield-Taylor, "From Ruskin to Rouse," in Beth Sullenberger, ed., *Historic Preservation: Forging a Discipline* (New York: Preservation Alumni Inc., 1989), 28. I might note that looking at our national leadership over the last generation — Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush and Dan Quayle — is an exercise that well lends itself to disproving the accuracy of Darwin's and Spencer's theories.

23. Ibid.
24. Blackstone Valley Regional Development Corporation and Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, "Economic Impact Analysis Study of Blackstone River and Canal State Park, unpublished, Worcester, 1988; Timothy Tyrell and Patt Manheim, "Economic Assessment of Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor [sic]," Kingston, R.I., 1989.
25. E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past and Present* 38 (December 1967): 56-97; Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966); Daniel Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975).
26. Chatfield-Taylor, "From Ruskin to Rouse," 29.
27. The commission received \$250,000 each for fiscal years 1988 and 1989. The commission's operating money was boosted to \$350,000 in fiscal year 1991 and \$346,000 in 1992. Similar funds were appropriated to the National Park Service for technical assistance in each of those years. A fiscal 1991 authorization gave the commission \$1 million a year, for three ensuing fiscal years, to carry out demonstration projects. This money was appropriated in 1992, but the commission had not received it as of July 1992.
28. Excellent examples include conversion to senior housing of the Whitin Cotton Mill in Northbridge and of the Crown and Eagle Mill in North Uxbridge, which suffered a devastating fire in the mid-1970s. Blackstone Valley preservation efforts received two of the ten Massachusetts Historical Preservation Commission awards given on May 17, 1990.

Latinos in Massachusetts

Growth and Geographical Distribution

Ralph Rivera, Ph.D.

Massachusetts has undergone radical changes in its racial/ethnic composition in the last ten years. The Latino population, owing to its extraordinary growth rate during the last two decades, is the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the state. Yet relatively little is known about this population because of the "information gap." Based on 1990 census data, this article focuses on the growth and geographical distribution of Latinos in Massachusetts. It considers the undercount of Latinos, the growth of Latinos in the commonwealth from a national perspective, and assesses the increase of Latinos in the New England states. It explores the growth in numbers of Massachusetts Latinos within the context of changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the state's population and examines their growth and geographic distribution in the commonwealth's cities and towns with the largest concentrations of Latinos. General policy implications are discussed.

Mirroring the population shifts that occurred throughout the United States in the past decade,¹ the population of racial/ethnic minorities in Massachusetts increased at a significantly faster rate than that of whites.² The Latino³ population, due to its extraordinary growth rate during the last two decades, is the group most responsible for making the commonwealth significant in the national trend toward greater ethnic diversity. Moreover, Latinos are now the largest racial/ethnic minority group in the state.⁴

The size and phenomenal growth of the Latino population has increasingly been the subject of discussions in the media and the business community throughout the United States. But recognition of Latinos as a significant population that warrants such attention in Massachusetts has come slowly. Unlike blacks, who are concentrated in Boston (50 percent of all blacks in Massachusetts live in Boston, compared with 21.5 percent of all Latinos), Latinos are dispersed geographically throughout the state.⁵ Their geographic distribution, combined with their limited

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economic and political power, have made Latinos victims of indifference and neglect in the commonwealth.

This treatment has been fueled by the "information gap" in Latinos in Massachusetts.⁶ The information gap is the lack of basic information and analysis of the problems and needs of this population. Data readily available for whites and blacks are often nonexistent for Latinos. This gap "extends from basic vital health statistics such as death rates and causes of death, to the participation and outcomes for Latinos in public programs, such as employment and educational programs, and to the understanding of the complex dynamics of Latino communities in the State."⁷ Furthermore, even when adequate data are available, they are often not analyzed fully and comprehensively.

This article seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge base used in forming policies and programs that affect Latinos. With this objective in mind, I focus on the growth and geographical distribution of Latinos in Massachusetts as documented by the 1990 census data released in March 1991 under requirements of Public Law 94-171.

The Latino Undercount

The U.S. Census Bureau has acknowledged that the differential undercount⁸ of Latinos was a problem in 1970 and 1980.⁹ Reasons given for the undercount include:¹⁰

- Resistance from some Latinos to government inquiry into their lives
- Prevalence of Spanish-language usage among Latinos
- Paucity of Latino census enumerators
- Low educational levels and illiteracy
- Presence of a significant number of undocumented Latinos who were reluctant to complete a census form

In spite of Census Bureau efforts to improve the counting of Latinos in 1990, there is evidence that a substantial differential undercounting of Latinos again took place nationally as well as in many urban centers in Massachusetts.¹¹ According to a postenumeration survey conducted by the Census Bureau to determine the accuracy of the original count, the 1990 census may have missed up to 1.7 million Latinos nationwide, which represents a 7.3 percent undercount for this group compared with 6.2 percent for blacks and a 2.5 percent overall undercount.¹² Furthermore, the Census Bureau acknowledges a minimum Latino undercount of 4.2 percent or 973,000.¹³ For Massachusetts, undercount estimates of 4.2 to 7.3 percent represent between 12,077 and 20,991 Latinos.

The 1990 census undercount of Massachusetts Latinos seems particularly severe for Chelsea and Boston, reporting only 9,018 Latinos in Chelsea, or 31.4 percent of the city population. Estimates of the Latino community produced by other sources, however, suggest a significantly larger community. Figures developed by the Center

for Community Planning at the University of Massachusetts at Boston show 11,800 to 12,700 Latinos in Chelsea, or 44 percent of the total population.¹⁴

Additional evidence that suggests a serious undercount of Latinos in Chelsea is found in data on the percentage of Latino students enrolled in Chelsea public schools. In 1989, 54.6 percent of the student body was Latino. Part of the variation between the 1990 census figures on the percentage of Latinos in the total population and the percentage of Latino students can be attributed to larger families among Latinos. The sizable twenty-three-point differential, however, suggests that an undercount is responsible for a part of this discrepancy.

In Boston, municipal officials have expressed serious concerns over the general undercount in the city in 1990. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Black Legislative Caucus also have voiced their distress over the undercount nationally within communities of color.¹⁵

Boston city officials have quarreled with the Census Bureau over the mailing list used for the census. They argued that it did not account for between 12,000 and 20,000 housing units.¹⁶ According to city of Boston administration officials, this resulted in an undercount of between 42,350 and 50,000 Boston residents.¹⁷ Given that Latinos represent 11 percent of the Boston population, their share of the undercount attributed to the missing housing units would be between 4,659 and 5,500. It is important to note, however, that although Boston city officials have expressed concerns that go beyond the undercounting of housing units, they apparently did not seek remedies to address these other problems in their discussions with the Census Bureau.¹⁸ Seemingly, the fact that undercounts have been historically greatest in low-income inner-city minority neighborhoods has been neglected by Boston city officials.

According to the 1990 census, there are 61,955 Latinos in Boston. This number represents a growth rate of 70.1 percent between 1980 and 1990 for the Boston Latino population, an extremely modest rate compared with Latinos in other cities and towns across the state.¹⁹ However, as early as 1981, the Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation, using data from the Center for Survey Research at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, had already estimated Boston's Latino population at over 55,000, that is, 53 percent higher than the official 1980 census count of 36,068.²⁰ Moreover, the Massachusetts Commission on Hispanic Affairs had also estimated the Boston Latino population at 55,000 in 1985.²¹ Given that number of Latinos in Boston by 1981 or 1985, it is safe to assume that by 1990 it would have grown to significantly more than the 61,955 counted by the census.

In July 1991, U.S. Commerce Secretary Robert A. Mosbacher announced that the 1990 census figures would not be statistically adjusted to compensate for the undercount.²² The debate is not yet over, since five cities²³ and several groups (including the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) will reopen a lawsuit seeking a new count in a New York federal court. Past experiences with census undercounts suggest, however, that it is highly unlikely that an adjustment will be made. The Census Bureau has never adjusted to compensate for an undercount.²⁴ It is important, nonetheless, for policymakers to understand that while the official 1990 census data document the dramatic growth of the Latino population, these figures are highly conservative estimates of its actual size.

National Perspective

The United States continued to experience a dramatic growth in its populations of people of color during the 1980s. A significant amount of that surge occurred among Latinos, who increased by 7.7 million people, or 53 percent, during that decade. The Latino population has been, and is expected to continue, increasing significantly faster than the non-Latino population. Moreover, its growth is so rapid that Latinos are projected to become the largest ethnic group in the country by the year 2010.²⁵

While they reside in every state in the nation, they are geographically concentrated in five states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois contain almost three quarters of all Latinos in the United States. Furthermore, the first three states account for 64 percent of the Latino population in the country.

A salient characteristic of the Massachusetts Latino community in the national context is its rapid rate of growth. As shown in Table 1, the Massachusetts Latino population grew at a faster rate between 1970 and 1980 (113.2%) and again between 1980 and 1990 (103.9%) than did its counterparts in any of the other fourteen states with the highest concentration of Latinos in 1990. The 103.9 percent rate in the last decade is almost twice the growth rate of Latinos nationwide (53%). With 287,549 Latinos, Massachusetts has the tenth-largest Latino population in the United States; however, it constitutes only 1.3 percent of the national Latino population.

Table 1

Latino Population Growth in the Fifteen States with Highest Concentration of Latinos, 1970, 1980, and 1990^a

State	1970	1980	1990	Growth 1970–1980 (%)	Growth 1980–1990 (%)
California	2,368,748	4,544,331	7,687,938	91.8	69.2
Texas	1,840,862	22,985,824	4,339,905	62.2	45.4
New York	1,352,302	1,659,300	2,214,046	22.7	33.4
Florida	405,037	858,158	1,574,143	111.9	83.4
Illinois	393,347	635,602	904,446	61.6	42.3
New Jersey	288,488	491,883	739,861	70.5	50.4
Arizona	265,006	440,701	688,338	66.3	56.2
New Mexico	308,340	477,222	579,224	54.8	1.4
Colorado	225,506	339,717	424,302	50.6	24.9
Massachusetts	66,146	141,043	287,549	113.2	103.9
Pennsylvania	108,893	153,961	232,262	41.4	50.9
Washington	57,358	120,016	214,570	109.2	78.8
Connecticut	65,468	124,499	213,116	90.2	71.2
Michigan	151,070	162,440	201,596	7.5	24.1
Virginia	40,222	79,868	160,288	98.6	100.7

Sources: Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1984; U.S. Census Bureau, 1983; and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

^a States are ranked by the size of their Latino population in 1990.

New England

While New England continues to be one of the least diverse regions of the United States, the growth of people of color in this area of the country during the 1980s was

dramatic. As a result of interstate migration and the fact that many new immigrants are choosing to settle in different states and smaller cities than their predecessors, the New England states experienced among the highest rates of growth of Latinos, blacks, and Asians of any area in the United States. Three of the five fastest-growing state Latino populations in the nation are in New England — Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire (see Table 2).

Three of the five fastest-growing black populations were also in New England. New Hampshire had the highest growth rate for blacks (80.4%) of all states, while Vermont ranked third (71.9%), and Maine fifth (64.3%). The two fastest-growing Asian populations were in Rhode Island (245.6%) and New Hampshire (219.0%), whereas Massachusetts ranked sixth (189.7%).

Table 2

States with the Fastest-Growing Latino Population, 1980 and 1990

State	1980	1990	% of Growth 1980–1990
Rhode Island	19,707	45,752	132.2
Nevada	53,879	124,419	130.9
Massachusetts	141,043	287,549	103.9
New Hampshire	5,587	11,333	102.8
Virginia	79,868	160,288	100.7

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1982, and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

Table 3

**Growth of the Latino Population in the New England States,
1970–1980 and 1980–1990**

State	1970	1980	1990	Growth 1970–1980 %	Growth 1980–1990 %
Connecticut	65,468	124,499	213,116	90.2	71.2
Maine	2,433	5,005	6,829	105.7	36.4
Massachusetts	66,146	141,043	287,549	113.2	103.9
New Hampshire	2,281	5,587	11,333	144.9	102.8
Rhode Island	7,596	19,707	45,752	159.4	132.2
Vermont	1,611	3,304	3,661	105.1	10.8

Sources: Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1984; U.S. Census Bureau, 1983; and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

A look at the increase of Latinos in the New England states between 1970 to 1980 and 1980 to 1990 (see Table 3) shows spectacular growth for almost all states during both periods. The exceptions are Maine and Vermont during 1980–1990, when Latinos grew by only 36.4 percent and 10.8 percent, respectively, after each had grown by 105 percent in the previous ten-year period.

The Latino population, however, continued to swell at a rate significantly higher than the national rate of 53 percent between 1980 and 1990 in the other four New

England states. The Rhode Island Latino population, the fastest growing in the country, increased by 132.2 percent between 1980 and 1990, while the number of Massachusetts Latinos grew by 103.9 percent. Although the New Hampshire Latino population is still quite small (11,333), it increased by an impressive 102.8 percent during the last decade. The Connecticut Latino population expanded by 71.2 percent.

It is important to note that the high growth rates for Rhode Island and New Hampshire are a function of the relatively small number of Latinos in each state in 1980. Conversely, Massachusetts had the fastest-growing Latino population in the country when compared with states of more than 100,000 Latinos in 1980.

Massachusetts

Diversity

During the past twenty years Massachusetts has gone from one of the least ethnically and racially diverse states in the United States to one of medium diversity.²⁶ While racial and ethnic minority groups represented only slightly more than 4 percent in 1970, they grew to over 12 percent in 1990 (see Table 4). In 1980, racial and ethnic minority groups represented 7.5 percent of the total state population, of which 3.7 percent were blacks, 2.5 percent were Latinos, and 0.9 percent were Asians. In 1990 this population expanded to 12.2 percent of the total population. Blacks increased to 4.6 percent, Latinos to 4.8 percent, and Asians to 2.4 percent of the population.

As stated previously, the number of Latinos in the commonwealth doubled in size from 1970 to 1980 and again between 1980 and 1990, and they are now the largest

Table 4

Massachusetts Population Changes by Racial/Ethnic Group and Total Population, 1970, 1980, and 1990

Racial/Ethnic Group	1970 Population (%)	1980 Population (%)	1990 Population (%)	1970 - 980 Change (%)	1980 - 1990 Change (%)
Non-Hispanic white	5,477,624 (95.8)	5,305,963 (92.5)	5,280,292 (87.8)	-171,661 (-3.1)	-25,671 (-0.5)
Non-Hispanic black	175,817 (3.1)	212,608 (3.7)	274,464 (4.6)	+36,791 (+20.9)	+61,856 (+29.1)
Hispanic origin	66,146 (1.2)	141,043 (2.5)	287,549 (4.8)	+74,897 (+113.2)	+146,506 (+103.9)
Non-Hispanic Asian	20,766 (0.4)	49,501 (0.9)	143,392 ^a (2.4)	+28,735 (+183.4)	+93,891 (+189.7)
Total population	5,719,587	5,737,037 ^b	6,016,425 ^c	+17,450 (+0.3)	+279,388 (+4.9)

Sources: Commission on Hispanic Affairs, 1986; U.S. Census Bureau, 1982; and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

^a The 1990 census data on non-Hispanic Asians are not yet available; therefore, this count includes Hispanics who are Asians. In 1980, 892 Latinos (0.6% of all Latinos) in Massachusetts identified their race as Asian.

^b The 1980 total population includes 27,922 persons who are of other races and not of Hispanic origin.

^c The 1990 total population includes 30,728 persons who are of other races and not of Hispanic origin.

minority group in the state. During these same periods, the non-Hispanic white population of the commonwealth decreased by 3.1 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively, and the non-Hispanic black population increased by 20.9 percent and 29.1 percent. Clearly, the modest growth in the Massachusetts total population (4.9%) is due to the increase of Latinos and blacks, as well as to the Asian population that increased by a remarkable 189.7 percent in the last ten years.

Table 5

**Population Changes for Racial / Ethnic Group and
Total Population by Selected Cities, 1980 and 1990**

City	Year	Total ^a	Non-Hispanic White(%)	Non-Hispanic Black (%)	Hispanic Origin (%)	Non-Hispanic Asian(%)
Boston	1990	574,283	338,734 (59.0)	136,887 (23.8)	61,955 (10.8)	30,388 ^b (5.3)
	1980	562,994	384,451 (68.3)	122,102 (21.7)	36,068 (6.5)	16,073 (2.9)
Chelsea	1990	28,710	16,930 (59.0)	1,140 (4.0)	9,018 (31.4)	1,435 (5.0)
	1980	25,431	21,100 (83.0)	517 (2.0)	3,551 (14.2)	175 (0.7)
Holyoke	1990	43,704	28,519 (65.3)	1,145 (2.6)	13,573 (31.1)	356 (0.8)
	1980	44,678	37,227 (83.3)	1,088 (2.4)	6,156 (13.7)	146 (0.3)
Lawrence	1990	70,207	38,401 (54.7)	1,195 (1.7)	29,237 (41.6)	1,358 (1.9)
	1980	63,175	51,712 (81.9)	694 (1.1)	10,296 (16.3)	278 (0.4)
Lowell	1990	103,439	79,165 (76.5)	2,093 (2.0)	10,499 (10.1)	11,493 (11.1)
	1980	92,418	86,105 (93.2)	1,089 (1.2)	4,585 (4.9)	478 (0.5)
Lynn	1990	81,245	65,166 (80.2)	5,423 (6.7)	7,432 (9.1)	3,003 (3.7)
	1980	78,471	73,105 (93.2)	2,776 (3.5)	1,998 (2.7)	190 (0.2)
Springfield	1990	156,983	99,869 (63.6)	28,484 (18.1)	26,528 (16.9)	1,636 (1.0)
	1980	152,319	112,608 (73.9)	24,531 (16.1)	13,804 (9.1)	796 (0.5)
Worcester	1990	169,759	141,416 (83.3)	6,746 (4.0)	16,258 (9.6)	4,770 (2.8)
	1980	161,799	149,540 (92.4)	4,498 (2.8)	6,877 (4.0)	786 (0.5)

Sources: U.S. Census, Bureau, 1982, and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

^aThe total population includes persons who are of "other races" and not of Hispanic origin. The sum of all groups may not equal the total population of each city or town because the "other race" category is not included in the table. The sum of the percentages of each group by city or town may not equal 100 percent for the same reason.

^bThe 1990 census data on non-Hispanic Asians are not yet available, therefore this count includes Hispanics who are Asians.

Table 6

**Massachusetts Population
by Racial/Ethnic Group, by Counties, 1990**

County	Total Population	Non-Hispanic White (%)	Non-Hispanic Black (%)	Hispanic Origin (%)	Other Races (%)
Barnstable	186,605	177,956 (95.4)	2,727 (1.5)	2,287 (1.2)	3,635 (1.9)
Berkshire	139,352	134,177 (96.3)	2,454 (1.8)	1,407 (1.0)	1,314 (0.9)
Bristol	506,325	474,032 (93.6)	7,203 (1.4)	13,578 (2.7)	11,512 (2.3)
Dukes	11,639	10,896 (93.6)	323 (2.8)	121 (1.0)	299 (2.6)
Essex	670,080	600,518 (89.6)	10,242 (1.5)	48,440 (7.3)	10,880 (1.6)
Franklin	70,092	68,074 (97.1)	457 (0.7)	842 (1.2)	719 (1.0)
Hampden	456,310	373,426 (81.8)	32,105 (7.0)	45,785 (10.0)	4,994 (1.1)
Hampshire	146,568	135,451 (92.4)	2,428 (1.7)	3,887 (2.7)	4,802 (3.3)
Middlesex	1,398,468	1,258,602 (90.0)	37,677 (2.7)	47,383 (3.4)	54,806 (3.9)
Nantucket	6,012	5,759 (95.8)	140 (2.3)	50 (0.8)	63 (1.0)
Norfolk	616,087	577,079 (93.7)	11,532 (1.9)	8,414 (1.4)	19,062 (3.1)
Plymouth	435,276	401,847 (92.3)	15,003 (3.4)	9,571 (2.2)	8,855 (2.0)
Suffolk	663,906	412,210 (62.1)	138,695 (20.9)	72,844 (11.0)	40,157 (6.0)
Worcester	709,705	650,265 (91.6)	13,478 (1.9)	32,940 (4.6)	13,022 (1.8)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

While most cities and towns throughout Massachusetts remain primarily white, the dramatic growth of the black, Latino, and Asian populations in the state's larger cities, coupled with a decrease in the white population, has resulted in a significantly more diverse population in these urban centers. A comparison of the racial/ethnic group composition in the state's largest cities in 1980 and 1990 shows a notable increase of people of color as a percentage of their total population (see Table 5).

In 1980, people of color represented less than 20 percent of the population in the cities of Lawrence, Chelsea, and Holyoke. By 1990, 45.3 percent of the Lawrence population, 41 percent of the Chelsea population, and 34.7 percent of the Holyoke population were people of color. Furthermore, people of color constitute 41 percent of the Boston population, 36.4 percent in Springfield, 23.5 percent in Lowell, 19.8 percent in Lynn, and 16.7 percent in Worcester.

A look at the racial/ethnic group composition of the Massachusetts counties, however, shows extremely low rates of diversity (see Table 6). Only two counties, Suffolk and Hampden, have populations of color that significantly exceed 10 percent. Suffolk County is the most diverse in the commonwealth and, according to Allen and

Turner, ranks seventeenth among the thirty most ethnically diverse counties in the United States,²⁷ with nearly 38 percent of its population comprised of people of color. Almost 19 percent of the Hampden County population consists of racial/ethnic minority people. Conversely, the least diverse counties in the state are Franklin (97.1% white) and Berkshire (96.3% white).

Table 7

**Growth of Massachusetts Latino Population
by Selected Cities and Towns, 1970, 1980, and 1990**

Cities/Towns	1970	1980	1990	1980-1990 Change (%)	% Latino of Total
Amherst	298	767	1,669	117.6	4.7
Attleboro	324	788	1,130	43.4	2.9
Boston	17,984	36,068	61,955	71.8	10.8
Brockton	936	2,142	5,860	173.6	6.3
Brookline	637	1,162	1,596	37.3	2.9
Cambridge	1,954	4,536	6,506	43.4	6.8
Chelsea	1,098	3,551	9,018	154.0	31.4
Chicopee	899	629	2,050	225.9	3.6
Clinton	252	695	1,032	48.5	7.8
Everett	476	469	1,371	192.3	3.8
Fall River	220	2,187	1,577	-27.9	1.7
Fitchburg	335	1,095	3,957	261.4	9.6
Framingham	1,237	2,186	5,291	142.0	8.1
Haverhill	278	931	2,714	191.5	5.3
Holyoke	1,870	6,165	13,573	120.2	31.1
Lawrence	2,327	10,296	29,237	184.0	41.6
Leominster	634	1,347	3,161	134.7	8.3
Lowell	1,079	4,585	10,499	129.0	10.1
Lynn	953	1,998	7,432	272.0	9.1
Malden	302	529	1,417	167.9	2.6
Marlborough	214	361	1,338	270.6	4.2
Medford	437	411	990	140.9	1.7
Methuen	305	637	2,070	225.0	5.2
Milford	227	586	1,022	74.4	4.0
New Bedford	1,144	4,497	6,653	47.9	6.7
Newton	1,333	1,147	1,638	42.8	2.0
Northampton	180	557	1,201	115.6	4.1
Peabody	537	614	1,346	119.2	2.9
Quincy	564	524	1,197	128.4	1.4
Revere	313	339	1,631	381.1	3.8
Salem	265	894	2,548	185.0	6.7
Somerville	701	1,530	4,784	212.7	6.3
Southbridge	305	1,033	2,278	120.5	12.8
Springfield	5,456	13,804	26,528	92.2	16.9
Taunton	502	1,292	2,362	82.8	4.7
Waltham	527	1,417	3,239	128.6	5.6
Westfield	819	1,026	1,564	52.4	4.1
Woburn	316	568	834	46.8	2.3
Worcester	1,674	6,877	16,258	136.4	9.6

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1973; U.S. Census Bureau, 1982; and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

Growth

The Massachusetts Latino population registered growth rates in all cities and towns where they resided between 1980 and 1990 (see Table 7), with the sole exception of Fall River. The fast growth of the Latino population is a result of a young population (36 percent are under eighteen compared with 21 percent of whites, 30 percent of blacks, and 28 percent of Asians), high birth rates, and immigration, both legal and undocumented. According to a 1989 report by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 6.5 percent of the total births in the state were to Latino mothers during a period when it was estimated that Latinos represented only 3.8 percent of the total population.²⁸

While the census data by Latino subgroup are not yet available, other evidence suggests that the immigration of Latinos to Massachusetts, primarily from Central America and the Dominican Republic, and migration from Puerto Rico continued at an accelerated rate throughout the 1980s.²⁹ Furthermore, a significant number of Latinos migrated from other states to Massachusetts, particularly during the economic boom.

While the Latino population in some cities and towns represents a somewhat smaller percentage of the total population, it increased at an extraordinary rate during the last decade, as may be seen in Table 7. The most dramatic Latino growth occurred in Revere (381%), Lynn (272%), Marlborough (271%), and Fitchburg (261%). In addition, Latinos in the following cities and towns expanded by more than 200 percent, that is, at more than twice the state Latino growth rate: Chicopee (226%), Methuen (225%), and Somerville (213%). Other cities and towns whose Latino population also increased substantially include Everett (192%), Haverhill (192%), Salem (185%), Lawrence (184%), Brockton (174%), Malden (168%), and Chelsea (154%).

It is important to note that the explosive growth rates for most of these cities and towns is a function of the relatively small numbers of Latinos in each area in 1980. These rates clearly indicate, however, that this population is increasing rapidly in areas where it had not previously grown.

Geographical Distribution

The Massachusetts Latino population also evidenced notable changes in its geographic distribution in the past ten years. Latinos reside in every city and town of the state, and although they are concentrated significantly in the larger cities, they concentrate in many towns as well.

In 1980 there were only four cities where Latinos represented more than 8 percent of the total city population — Lawrence (16.3%), Chelsea (14.0%), Holyoke (13.8%), and Springfield (9.1%). According to the 1990 census, there are now twelve cities and towns where the Latino population represents more than 8 percent of the total population. While these municipalities contain almost two thirds of all Latinos in Massachusetts, they are scattered throughout the commonwealth (see Table 8). The highest concentration of Latinos is in Lawrence, where four out of every ten residents are Latino, and in Chelsea and Holyoke, where one of every three residents is Latino.

Table 8

**Growth of Massachusetts Latino Population
by Cities and Towns with Highest Concentration
of Latinos, 1970, 1980, and 1990**

City/Town	1970	1980	1990	Growth 1980-1990 (%)	% of 1990 Population	% of Total Latino Population
Lawrence	2,327	10,296	29,237	184.0	41.6	10.2
Chelsea	1,098	3,551	9,018	154.0	31.4	3.1
Holyoke	1,870	6,165	13,573	120.2	31.1	4.7
Springfield	5,456	13,804	26,528	92.2	16.9	9.2
Southbridge	305	1,033	2,278	120.5	12.8	0.8
Boston	17,984	36,068	61,955	71.8	10.8	21.5
Lowell	1,079	4,585	10,499	129.0	10.1	3.6
Worcester	1,674	6,877	16,258	136.4	9.6	5.6
Fitchburg	335	1,095	3,957	261.4	9.6	1.4
Lynn	953	1,998	7,432	272.0	9.1	2.6
Leominster	634	1,347	3,161	134.7	8.3	1.1
Framingham	1,237	2,186	5,291	142.0	8.1	1.8

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1973; U.S. Census Bureau, 1982; and U.S. Census Bureau, 1991.

While the state's largest Latino community is still in Boston, the 1990 census reveals that between 1980 and 1990, the proportion of all Massachusetts Latinos living in Boston decreased from 25.8 to 21.5 percent. On the other hand, Lawrence experienced the largest increase in proportionate share of the Massachusetts Latino population during the same period (7.3% to 10.2%).

Policy Implications

The accelerated growth of the Latino population in Massachusetts and New England poses many challenges for policymakers. Their growth, combined with that of blacks and Asians, introduces racial/ethnic diversity to this state and region of the country as has never existed previously and has concomitantly raised concerns over how to integrate these immigrants and migrants into local communities and their economies effectively.

The new diversity has rekindled the historic tension between assimilation and pluralism as seen by the various English-only legislative initiatives. However, instead of seeking the mythical "melting pot," the general public policy thrust should focus on facilitating acculturation and integration in a way that preserves ethnic identity, language, and cultural expressions. In addition, the growth of Latinos has critical policy implications for at least four other major areas: education, economic participation, political participation, and statistical policy.

Education

The growing Latino population should be seen as a resource, and the policy emphasis should be to invest in developing this resource. Therefore, the public educational system must respond to the needs of the Latino community. This is particularly critical in inner-city schools where Latinos constitute a large percentage of the student

population and in some cases make up the majority of students (for example, Lawrence, Holyoke, and Chelsea). Yet, because of the declining enrollment of white children in the public schools, fewer resources are being allocated to education; subsequently, cities tend to have limited resources to support essential programs. Consequently, the education policy thrust should be to target additional financial resources to support and expand existing programs such as preschool and transitional bilingual education programs, as well as to provide additional English-language and skills training programs for Latino youths and adults.

Economic Participation

Over the next decade, Latinos will constitute a growing segment of the state's labor force, and they will make up an increasing proportion of the taxpayers supporting Social Security, Medicare, and other transfer payments required to sustain an aging society. Consequently, public policies that seek to improve the economic status of Latinos and foster their full economic participation in all segments of the economy should be supported. The policy direction should include programs that seek to eliminate barriers to employment which are the result of limited English-language proficiency and inadequate educational credentials and programs that provide employment and training opportunities that will assist Latino workers in developing occupational skills which are more compatible with the current and future needs of Massachusetts's industries.

Political Participation

The growth of the Latino population will lead to more active participation in the political system and to increased political visibility and empowerment for this group, particularly for Puerto Ricans, who comprise more than half the state's Latino population and are U.S. citizens by birth. To facilitate their fullest participation in the electoral process, policy initiatives designed to eliminate barriers to voter registration should be considered. The availability of mail-in and Election Day registration could increase Latino voter registration and voter turnout rates. Voter registration information should be distributed by state, county, and municipal agencies, as well as by community-based organizations. Moreover, community-based organizations should be allowed to register voters.

Statistical Policy

The formulation of sound public policy requires a solid information and research base. Given the size and continued growth of the Latino population, state and local statistical policy should seek to eliminate the previously noted information gap. Reliable and objective information on Latinos is needed to inform public debate and policymaking. State and municipal departments should begin systematically to gather more information on this population by adding, where appropriate, a Latino identifier in population-specific data sets. In addition, a Latino identifier should allow for the classification of the major Latino subgroups in Massachusetts — Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Central Americans, South Americans, Mexicans, and Cubans.

One of the primary characteristics of the Latino population in Massachusetts is its rapid growth. We move into the 1990s and the twenty-first century with the knowl-

edge that the Latino population, the largest racial/ethnic group in Massachusetts, has doubled in size each of the last two decades, and it is expected to continue to grow at a significantly faster rate than the white and black populations throughout the next decade. The explosive growth and geographic dispersion of the Massachusetts Latino population justifies immediate attention by policymakers in the public as well as private sectors.

Indeed, the Latino population poses formidable challenges to these policymakers. Latinos, the most disadvantaged ethnic minority group in the state, have the highest poverty rate — “47 percent — ” of all state Latino populations.³⁰ The benefits of the Massachusetts miracle that accrued to whites, and to some extent blacks, were not shared with the Latino community.³¹ Clearly, the Latino population will require expanded attention by state and local policymakers during the 1990s to enable this community to gain full participation in the commonwealth’s social, economic, political, and educational life.

While the issues and needs of the Latino population in Massachusetts are not new, what is new is the large numbers of Latinos affected by such issues. The implications of their accelerated growth and geographic dispersion are numerous. In the years ahead Latinos are virtually guaranteed to have an increasing impact on the economic, political, and social structures of many cities and towns throughout the commonwealth.

Like previous immigrants to Massachusetts, Latinos come here seeking, among other things, economic opportunity for themselves and their families. Like earlier immigrants, they seek peace and a better life for their children, and they are willing to work hard to achieve this quality of life. Expanded economic opportunities, however, are essential for the rapidly increasing Latino labor force to contribute to the present and future viability and competitiveness of the Massachusetts economy.

It will be extremely difficult for Massachusetts to have an economically competitive economy without an economically competitive Latino work force. Consequently, policymakers must seek ways to assure full participation in the state’s economy for this population. Clearly, the success of the Latino population is not only a selfish community concern, but also a matter of self-interest for the commonwealth as a whole. ■

Notes

1. F. Barringer, “Census Shows Profound Change in Racial Makeup of Nation, *New York Times*, March 11, 1991, 1, 8.
2. White, black, and Asian are used throughout this article to refer to non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, and non-Hispanic Asians, unless otherwise noted.
3. Latino is used throughout this article to refer to U.S. residents of Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, or Mexican ancestry, as well as Spanish-speaking people from Central or South American countries. However, the terms “Hispanic origin” and “non-Hispanic” are used in the tables to maintain consistency with the U.S. Census Bureau’s terminology.
4. The growing population diversity in the United States and in Massachusetts makes it more important than ever to understand the meaning of the terms “race” and “ethnicity.” While these terms are often used interchangeably, they are not synonymous. According to the

Census Bureau, there are only four racial groups — white, black, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans. There are, however, hundreds of ethnic — religious, cultural, or national — groups. The term "Hispanic," an ethnic category, not a racial group, refers to Latino heritage. Latinos may be of any race.

Recent reports of the 1990 census data give figures for whites, blacks, Asians, and Native Americans (all of which include Latinos) and contrast these with figures of people of Hispanic origin. The appropriate comparison and presentation should be of mutually exclusive groups. This is achieved by disaggregating Latinos from the racial groups to produce the "non-Hispanic" white population, "non-Hispanic" black population, "non-Hispanic" Asian population, and so forth. This comparison shows that Latinos are the largest ethnic group in Massachusetts.

5. U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Population and Housing, 1990: P.L. 94-171 Data File* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991).
6. For more information on this topic, see M. Uriarte, *Latinos, Data and Public Policy: The Latino Information Gap in Massachusetts* (Boston: University of Massachusetts, Mauricio Gastón Institute, 1990); D. Hayes-Bautista and J. Hernandez, *Improving Data: A Research Strategy for New Immigrants* (New York: Russell Sage, 1985); Ford Foundation, *Public Policy Research and the Hispanic Community: Recommendations from Five Task Forces* (New York: Ford Foundation, 1984).
7. Uriarte, *Latinos, Data and Public Policy*, 3.
8. An undercount is the portion of the "real total population" that a census fails to count. A differential undercount is produced when a census misses more of one group in the population than of another. Historically, undercounts have been greatest in low-income inner-city neighborhoods.
9. W. Alonso and P. Starr, *The Politics of Numbers* (New York: Russell Sage, 1986).
10. See H. M. Choldin, "Statistics and Politics: The 'Hispanic Issue' in the 1980 Census," *Demography* 23, no. 3 (1986): 403–418, and "Hispanic Policy Development Project," *The Hispanic Almanac*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C., 1990).
11. T. Puente, "Latino Population Grows 53%, to 22.4 Million: 1980–90," *Hispanic Link Weekly Report*, March 18, 1991, 2.
12. "Census Tally May Be Short 1.7 Million," *Hispanic Link Weekly Report*, April 29, 1991, 1.
13. Ibid.
14. The Latino percentage of the total Chelsea population range is generated by computations utilizing the estimated total Latino population range and the final 1990 census figures for the total Chelsea population.
15. "Census Missed 6M, US Says," *Boston Globe*, May 19, 1991, 1.
16. See T. Coakley, "City Says Census May Be Under by 50,000," *Boston Globe*, September 4, 1990, 25; S. Marantz, "Census May Undercount Hub by 42,000, Official Says," *Boston Globe*, May 2, 1990, 25, 32; and M. Rezendes, "US Census Bureau Denies City of Boston's Charge of Undercount," *Boston Globe*, May 6, 1990, 86.
17. According to Marantz, "Census May Undercut Hub," these figures are based on a city estimate of 2.5 persons per dwelling unit.
18. Coakley, "City Says Census May Be Under," 25.
19. It is also important to note that the accuracy of the 1980 census in enumerating Latinos in Boston has been questioned. The estimated Latino undercount in Boston in 1980 was 10 percent, according to the Hispanic Policy Development Project, *Hispanic Almanac*.
20. Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation, *Boston's Hispanics and the 1980 Census: Where We Live* (Boston, 1981).
21. Massachusetts Commission on Hispanic Affairs, *Hispanics in Massachusetts: A Demo-*

graphic Analysis (Boston: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Commission on Hispanic Affairs, 1986).

22. F. Perez, "Census Decision Promises More Uncertainty," *Hispanic Link Weekly Report*, July 22, 1991, 1, 2.
23. The five cities are Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York.
24. U.S. General Accounting Office, *1990 Census Adjustment: Estimating Census Accuracy — "A Complex Task. Report to the Chairman, Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, House of Representatives*, GAO/GGD-91-42 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991).
25. "Hispanic Americans: An Emerging Group," *Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Statistical Bulletin* 2, October–December 1988.
26. J. P. Allen and E. Turner, "Where Diversity Reigns," *American Demographics*, August 1990, 34–38.
27. *Ibid.*, 38.
28. Massachusetts Commission on Hispanic Affairs, *Hispanics in Massachusetts*, 21.
29. See *ibid.*; Massachusetts Department of Public Health, *Hispanic Births in Massachusetts Volume 1: Facts and Figures* (Boston: Bureau of Health Statistics, Research and Evaluation, 1989); Center for Community Planning and the Collaborative for Community Service and Development, *The Hispanics of Chelsea: Who Are They?* (Boston: University of Massachusetts, College of Public and Community Service, 1990); and Center for Community Planning and the Collaborative for Community Service and Development, *Hispanics in Chelsea: Undocumented Hispanic Immigrants in Chelsea* (Boston: University of Massachusetts, College of Public and Community Service, 1990).
30. J. D. Haveman, J. Danzinger, and R. D. Plotnick, "State Poverty Rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics in the Late 1980s," *Focus* 13, no.1 (Madison: University of Wisconsin–Madison, Institute for Research on Poverty, 1991). According to this article, the national Latino poverty rate was 27.2 percent, and the Latino poverty rates for the other state Latino populations reported were Texas, 35.4 percent, New York, 35.0 percent, Idaho, 31.8 percent, Michigan, 30.5 percent, Colorado, 29.0 percent, New Mexico, 27.6 percent, Arizona, 26.6 percent, New Jersey, 26.6 percent, Illinois, 24.0 percent, California, 22.0 percent, and Florida, 19.0 percent.
31. Boston Foundation, *In the Midst of Plenty* (Boston: Boston Foundation Persistent Poverty Project, 1989).

The Cost of Home Ownership in Vermont 1975-1990

Arthur G. Woolf

Housing prices in Vermont, like those in the other New England states, shot up dramatically during the economic boom of the 1980s. This article investigates the causes of that price increase and focuses on the cost of home ownership in Vermont in the years 1975 to 1990. Cost of home ownership is defined as the percentage of family income needed to finance an average-price home. Although prices skyrocketed during the 1980s, the actual cost of home ownership as a percentage of income was about 15 percent greater in 1990 than it was during the mid-1970s. Housing price increases are expected to moderate during the 1990s because of slower economic growth and changing demographic forces. The cost of home ownership will continue to decline from the peak reached in 1988.

The Vermont housing sector produced a large number of housing units in the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1990, 48,060 units were built, a 22 percent increase in the state's housing stock.¹ This compares to an increase of 24,400 units in the previous decade. What is perhaps even more interesting is that during the 1970s, the state's population increased by 67,000, while during the 1980s, population growth was 51,000. Thus, twice as many housing units were built during the 1980s as in the 1970s. Moreover, this occurred despite the fact that Vermont population growth in the 1970s was 30 percent greater than in the 1980s. As will be shown later, changing state demographics explain a large part of this rapid housing growth compared to a relatively low rate of population growth.

As may be seen from Table 1, Vermont has a long tradition of above-average rates of home ownership. Despite the rapid growth in the number of new housing units built in the state, that tradition was called into question in the late 1980s. Escalating home and land prices were viewed by many as placing home ownership out of reach of the average Vermonter. This would imply that, if nothing was done, the historical

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pattern of home ownership would reverse. But as Table 1 reveals, preliminary U.S. census data show that notwithstanding the escalation in housing prices in the 1980s, Vermont home ownership rose during that decade, in contrast to a slight decline for the nation as a whole.²

Table 1

**Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units in Vermont
and the United States, 1930–1990**

Year	Vermont	United States
1930	59.8	47.8
1940	55.9	43.6
1950	61.2	55.0
1960	53.6	61.9
1970	69.1	62.9
1980	68.7	64.6
1990	69.0	64.2

Source: Census of Housing, various years.

This article analyzes the cost of home ownership in Vermont from 1975 to 1990 by examining the two key elements of home ownership: the purchase price and the mortgage costs of the house. Because the income required to finance a home is vitally important, I also examine the incomes of Vermonters over this period. I do not attempt to analyze rental housing, although movements in rental costs should generally parallel changes in housing costs. The article is, therefore, an analysis of the owner-occupied housing market for middle-income Vermonters, not low-income renters or others.

My study finds that the cost of home ownership as a percentage of income has exhibited different trends in three different periods. In the late 1970s, costs as a percentage of income were fairly stable. In the early 1980s, extremely high interest rates and sluggish income growth caused by the recessions of 1980 and 1981–1982 combined to make those costs high and volatile. In the final subperiod, 1985 to 1990, home ownership costs as a percentage of income were markedly below the levels of the early 1980s. While they exhibited a slight upward trend from 1985 to 1988, there was a significant decline in costs from 1988 to 1990. By 1990, costs as a percentage of income were about 10 to 15 percent above the level that prevailed in the mid to late 1970s.

While the costs of home ownership as a percentage of income was not at historical highs in 1990, the price of housing was at an all-time high.³ The rapid escalation of housing prices in Vermont is not, however, an isolated phenomenon. The states of the Northeast and the West Coast all experienced dramatic housing price increases during the late 1980s, although these have moderated and began to decline in 1989 or 1990. In contrast, the industrial Midwest and most of the Sunbelt states did not experience this growth. In some of those areas, housing prices have declined by a substantial amount in real, inflation-adjusted terms from their peak levels of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Indeed, the average rate of housing price appreciation for the

nation as a whole has been less than the rise in the consumer price index in every year since 1982.

The causes of rapidly increasing housing prices in Vermont are not altogether clear, but they are similar to those found elsewhere. Key factors include the strength of the local economy and the relatively low cost of Vermont land and houses compared to metropolitan areas of the Northeast. In addition, demographic factors have had major impacts, for example, members of the baby-boom generation moving into their prime home-buying years, an increase in the number of single-person households, and an increase in the number of elderly people remaining in their own homes. Two other crucial factors are the growing second-home market, which put upward pressure on land and housing prices in many areas of the state, and the passage of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, which left owner-occupied housing as one of the few tax shelters remaining for middle-income Americans.

The resulting upswing in the price of housing has many Vermonters concerned that home ownership is becoming a goal that is increasingly out of reach of the average citizen. Their fears are based on the rapid escalation of housing prices in most, if not all, parts of the state. However, the price is only one component of the overall cost of owning a house, the next important factor being that of financing the building and the land — the interest rate on home mortgages. Other costs, such as property taxes, energy, and insurance, while important, are dwarfed by the monthly payments of principal and interest. Because it is relatively large, only property taxes are included in the cost analysis.

The article also focuses on income growth in the state in relation to Vermonters' ability to meet housing payments, the historical trend of down payments and other closing costs, and the overall burden of housing costs on income.

Housing Price Issues

A report by Century 21 found that, in 1988, Vermont's housing price appreciation was second highest in the nation, with the average price of a house rising by 15.4 percent from 1987.⁴ A Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) data series shows that in 1980 an average house in Vermont sold for \$53,000. By 1990 the average price had escalated to \$121,900.⁵ This increase of 130 percent far outstrips the 58 percent increase in the U.S. Consumer Price Index over the same period.

Housing Prices

While most discussion about the cost of housing has focused on the price, it is quite difficult to get good data on average housing prices in Vermont for any length of time. The housing price series used in this study was compiled by the FHLB. Based on a monthly sample of all units purchased, including residential, vacation, and mobile homes, it is the one used by the Joint Housing Study Committee of the Vermont Legislature.⁶

However, a number of other sources can be used to obtain a measure of the average price of owner-occupied housing in Vermont. Appendix A discusses these measures in detail and analyzes their accuracy. It concludes that, although the FHLB data are the most widely used, the average price measure probably overstates the true median price of a residential house in Vermont by at least 15 percent.

But the FHLB data contain some anomalies. A large jump in prices from 1981 to 1982 is followed by a steep decline in 1983 and a smaller decline from 1984 to 1985. These patterns, rather than reflecting the true course of housing prices, may simply stem from the FHLB's small sample size.⁷ The alternative housing price series in Appendix A serves as a consistency check on the FHLB series and confirms that its conclusions are a reasonable, albeit high, estimate of the true course of housing prices in the state.

Housing prices in general have shown a steady increase over fifteen years ending in 1990, with the exceptions of 1983 and 1985, the rise being particularly steep from 1985 to 1989. Housing prices, which had been relatively steady from 1982 through 1985, in 1986 began a period of rapid increase, rising by 18 percent in that year, 15 percent in 1987, 12 percent in 1988, then tapering off to 8 percent in 1989 and only 1.1 percent in 1990. Although average Vermont housing prices increased by 65 percent from 1985 to 1990, it is important to note that housing price appreciation has slowed from its peak in 1986.

Comparing Vermont housing prices with inflation yields the following information.⁸ Over the entire 1975–1990 period, the average price of houses in Vermont rose at an average rate of 7.8 percent per year while consumer prices generally rose at 6.1 percent. This conceals some important changes occurring in different subperiods. Vermont housing prices tracked the national Consumer Price Index fairly well from 1975 through about 1985. But from 1985 to 1990, the national index rose by only 21 percent, one third of the 64 percent increase in average Vermont housing prices.

An examination of the components that make up the price of owner-occupied housing is necessary for a better understanding of the sources of housing price increases. The price of a house is based on the construction materials and supplies needed to build it, the labor necessary to put the materials and supplies together, and the improved land upon which the house is constructed.⁹ From 1975 to 1990, the price of an average house in Vermont increased at a compound average annual rate of 8.0 percent. Wages of Vermont contract construction workers increased at a compound average annual rate of 5.9 percent. Although we do not have measures of the cost of housing materials in Vermont, there is no reason to assume that the prices of lumber and other building materials in the state do not follow national trends. At the national level, these prices rose at a compound average annual rate of 4.7 percent.¹⁰ Thus, two of the three most important components of the cost of building a house, labor and materials, both rose at a rate lower than the rate at which home prices increased. This means that the price of land must have risen at a rate higher than the 8.0 percent rate of housing price appreciation.

According to many Vermont bankers and real estate appraisers, land prices are roughly 30 percent of the total price of a house; of the remaining 70 percent, approximately 40 percent represents labor and 60 percent materials. Housing prices are the weighted average of the cost of materials, labor, and land. From these data, it can be calculated that land values have been rising at a compound rate of 14.5 percent, far greater than either labor or materials costs.¹¹ Clearly, then, the cost of land and its improvements is the key factor driving up the price of housing.

This brings up the issue of whether land investors have been bidding up the price of land. This question can be addressed by examining the returns to be gained from the purchase of land and comparing it to alternative investments. If investors in land

are realizing abnormally high profits, the returns should be far greater than those that can be obtained from investing in other assets.

The gross rate of appreciation of improved land is greater than that of stock price appreciation. The Standard & Poor's 500 Stock Index appreciated at a compound rate of 9.5 percent from 1975 to 1990, compared to the 14.5 percent annual rate for land. However, landowners must pay an annual property tax, which reduces their annual return. The average statewide effective property tax rate during this period was about 1.7 percent. Accounting for the tax deductibility of property tax payments and netting out these factors from the return on land yields a net after-tax return of 13.2 percent. To obtain a true measure of the return to holding stocks, however, one must add the dividend yield on stocks to the 9.5 percent stock price appreciation. The Standard & Poor's average dividend yield was 4.4 percent over the period. Accounting for the taxation of dividend yields gives a total after-tax return to stockholders of 12.8 percent from 1975 to 1990.¹²

Thus, over the fifteen-year period, the average annual return to land as an investment (13.2%) was nearly identical to the return on stocks (12.8%). On average, then, investors in land did not make profits over and above those they could have realized on alternative investments.

Over the more recent 1980–1990 period, however, the findings are different. Performing the same analysis for those years as for the entire period results in a compound annual after-tax return on Vermont land of 19.0 percent, while the compound annual after-tax return on stocks was 14.1 percent. Over that ten-year span, returns to owners of land were 35 percent higher than those available to investors in the stock market.¹³

It is not coincidental that this rise in land values came at a time of unprecedented growth in the state's economy. The boom in land values resulted in returns greater than those available from alternative investments, as from stocks, and was of great benefit to Vermont landowners who realized large capital gains from the sale of land. While sellers of land experienced financial windfalls, the high land prices led to higher prices in the housing market, with corresponding problems for many potential home buyers, especially first-time buyers who had no equity from previous home or land ownership.

Housing Quality

People who purchase a house buy a set of quality factors associated with it. These include the size of the house, quality of construction, energy efficiency, aesthetics, and numerous other dimensions, such as the number of bathrooms and the type of interior and exterior appointments. An average house built in 1989 was of higher quality than a house built in previous years. Focusing only on the price of a house ignores this quality dimension: it is reasonable to expect housing prices to increase if the quality of the house increases. Although the data with which to measure the changes in the quality of homes purchased in Vermont in the 1980s are not available, it is possible to examine the quality of new homes built in the United States during this period.

The figures in Table 2 show that new homes built in 1989 were on average bigger and of better quality than houses built in 1980. The average size of new homes constructed in 1990 was 19 percent larger than in 1980 and 38 percent larger than in 1970. In 1970, fewer than half of all newly constructed homes had two or more

bathrooms; by 1980, 73 percent of new houses had two or more bathrooms, and by 1990, 87 percent did. The percentage of new homes with garages increased from 58 percent in 1970 to 69 percent in 1980. By 1990, more than four out of every five new houses were built with garages.

Table 2

Measures of Quality of New Homes in the United States			
Year	Median Square Feet Floor Area	Percentage With Two or More Bathrooms	Percentage With Garages
1970	1,385	48	58
1980	1,595	73	69
1984	1,605	76	69
1985	1,605	77	70
1986	1,660	80	74
1987	1,755	83	79
1988	1,810	86	78
1989	1,850	86	80
1990	1,905	87	82

Source: Characteristics of New Housing, U.S. Bureau of the Census, various years.

While these are national statistics, it is unlikely that Vermont's new housing stock differs substantially from national standards. In addition, 56 percent of residential year-round houses purchased in Vermont in 1988 and 25 percent of those purchased in 1989 were new and can therefore be expected to be similar to the national averages.¹⁴ All these quality improvements have increased the cost of building and the price of buying new homes. Moreover, as these types of amenities become desirable qualities in a home, owners of older homes tend to improve them through renovations and remodeling, resulting in correspondingly higher values and prices of existing homes.

A final component of the quality of houses is the environmental characteristics required of housing in Vermont. As in many states, environmental, zoning, and other state and local regulations ensure that certain minimum quality standards are met. The Vermont Act 200 Study Committee, which analyzed these issues in the context of affordable housing developments in Vermont, found that a maximum of 17 percent of the cost of housing could be explained by these types of regulations. At least half these costs involve impact fees levied on projects.¹⁵ Given that affordable housing projects involve lower-cost units than average-price units, and that most regulatory costs are fixed ones that are invariant to the total cost of a house, these percentages probably overestimate the component of the price of an average house that can be accounted for by such regulations. These estimates are similar to findings at the national level.¹⁶

Vermont's housing stock is different in one important qualitative dimension from the national average, namely, our relatively heavy reliance on mobile and manufactured homes. In 1980, 6.8 percent of the housing stock in the state consisted of these types of units, compared to 5.3 percent nationally. Further, by 1988 the stock of

mobile and manufactured homes in Vermont grew by 5,000 units, a 33 percent increase — double the 16 percent increase in the overall stock of housing units in the state during the same period.¹⁷

Demographics

One of the major factors influencing the price of housing in Vermont is the increased demand caused by the changing demographics of the state. The oldest members of the baby-boom generation — those people born from 1946 to 1964 — began to reach their late twenties in the early 1970s. The average age of first marriage in Vermont is twenty-four for females and twenty-six for males, so by the early 1980s, large numbers of baby-boomers were reaching the traditional age — twenty-five to thirty-four — and marital status at which people begin to purchase their own homes.¹⁸

The early 1980s, however, were years of very high interest rates and two back-to-back national economic recessions, which combined to put home ownership out of reach for many such potential first-time buyers. The economic recovery, which began in late 1982, allowed for growth in incomes, but high interest rates still made the cost of housing expensive by historical norms. Therefore, a great deal of pent-up housing demand in the early 1980s manifested itself in the middle and late 1980s.¹⁹

The magnitude of these demographic influences on housing prices can be seen by an examination of Vermont population statistics. In 1970, 11.9 percent of the state's population, or 52,700 people, had reached the age at which they would normally purchase a first home. By 1980, the population in this age group had increased to 17 percent of the total population, or 87,200 people. Nine years later, an estimated 103,000 Vermonters, or 18 percent of the state's population, were in this age category. The tremendous increase in the age group that puts the highest demand on housing put a strain on the state's housing sector. This helps to explain three interconnected events in the 1980s: lower overall state population growth than in the 1970s, a greater number of houses constructed in the 1980s as compared to the 1970s, and a rapid escalation of housing prices in the decade of the 1980s.

Demographic changes will work to moderate future housing-price trends in the state as the numbers of Vermonters in their prime home-buying years declines. By 1995 there will be 97,000 Vermonters in the twenty-five to thirty-four age group, accounting for 16.6 percent of the state's total population. By the year 2000, the 90,000 people in this age bracket will account for only 15 percent of the total state population.²⁰

Income Growth

Vermont's surge in economic growth during the mid and late 1980s put additional demands on the state housing stock. The state's income growth in this period was one of the strongest in the nation, with per capita personal income growing by 43 percent from 1984 to 1989 compared to a 34 percent gain for the nation as a whole. Therefore, Vermont's per capita income growth for that five-year period was 26 percent greater than that of the nation as a whole. The growth came partly from higher wages and partly from an increasing number of dual-income households, both of which put upward pressure on the price of Vermont housing as higher incomes allowed buyers to purchase bigger, better, and more expensive homes.

Vacation Homes

The growth in the state's economy was closely tied to the strength of the New England economy. Part of the regional growth influenced Vermont's economy through the vacation and tourism industry. But regional growth also put added strains on the housing market in Vermont because its housing and land prices are less expensive than those of other areas in the Northeast. This, plus the state's attractive geography and topography, led to a significant rise in vacation home construction in Vermont: in 1980, there were 35,328 vacation or seasonal homes; by 1990, nearly 10,00 additional vacation units had been built, representing a 28 percent increase in ten years.²¹

The pace of overall home construction in Vermont has not, however, been skewed significantly toward vacation units and away from year-round units, as Table 3 shows. Despite the rapid pace of vacation home development, the percentage of Vermont housing stock accounted for by vacation homes increased very little in the 1980s.²² The overall pattern revealed in Table 3 does mask markedly different patterns in different regions of the state. In Windham County, for example, 43 percent of all the new units constructed in the 1980s were vacation units. Nonetheless, the housing industry, responding to economic forces, built large numbers of year-round as well as vacation homes in the state.

Table 3

Vacation Units in Vermont, 1980–1990

Year	Year-Round Units	Vacation Units	Vacation Units as Percentage of Total Housing Units
1980	187,958	35,328	15.8%
1985	204,821	37,308	15.4%
1986	208,937	39,364	15.8%
1987	212,953	40,416	15.9%
1988	217,951	42,412	16.3%
1989	219,786	43,728	16.6%
1990	225,809	45,405	16.7%
Percentage Increase, 1980–1990			
	20.1%	28.5%	

Source: Population and Housing Estimates, Vermont Department of Health, various years, 1990 United States Census, Summary Tape File 1A (Vermont).

Tax Advantages

The 1986 federal tax reform legislation eliminated many deductions from the federal income tax code. The base of what is included in taxable income was broadened in order to lower tax rates. Many of the largest remaining deductions that are available to individuals are associated with home ownership. The most important is the deductibility of mortgage-interest expenditures, which cost the federal government about \$38 billion in lost tax revenues in 1990.²⁴ The deductibility of property taxes also comes with home ownership. The loss to the federal government for this tax advantage is estimated to be about \$10 billion in 1990.

Home owners receive an additional tax benefit because the federal government does not tax the value of imputed rent to home owners. The net rental income of

home owners who lease their homes to others is taxed. The in-kind income received by owners who occupy their homes goes untaxed.²⁵

When a home owner sells a house, capital gains on the sale are not taxed if the seller buys another house of equal or greater value within two years. This increases the attractiveness of housing as an investment because, unlike other investments, no capital gains taxes are due at the time of sale. In addition, home owners over fifty-five receive a one-time tax exclusion of up to \$125,000 from capital gains when selling a primary residence. This also has the effect of increasing the demand for housing as investment, not just consumption goods.

The elimination of other deductions from the tax code has increased the attractiveness of home ownership as both an investment and a means to reduce tax liabilities.²⁶ These changes have helped to increase the demand for homes by people who would not otherwise choose to purchase one as well as for more expensive homes from existing home owners.

It is difficult to estimate the dollar value of tax benefits to Vermonters from these tax advantages, but they clearly have helped to increase demand, and hence the price, of homes in the state.

Finally, it should be noted that all these tax advantages have existed for some time in the tax code. While they result in housing prices being higher than they otherwise would be, other than the changes resulting directly from the 1986 Tax Reform Act, they do not explain the increase in housing prices in the 1980s; they explain only their relative level.²⁷

Other Factors

Other demographic factors will put additional demands on Vermont housing stock. We will be unable to quantify many of these until the full 1990 census returns are published, probably sometime in 1993. Nonetheless, the general pattern of these trends is clear. The state's population will continue to age considerably, a pattern that has already begun and will continue for several decades. In 1989, 5.3 percent of the population was over seventy-five, compared to 4.8 percent in 1980 and 4.3 percent in 1970. By the late 1990s, approximately 6 percent of the state's population will be older than seventy-five. In the past, elderly people tended to live with relatives, but their pattern now is to live in their own homes. This reduces the number of houses that would otherwise have been made available for other home buyers and hence the overall supply of housing for younger people.

In addition, there has been a trend to smaller household sizes, as families have fewer children, more people postpone marriage to a later date, more people remain unmarried, and more divorces lead to an increased number of single-person households. In 1970 the ratio of population to nonvacation housing stock in the state was 2.98 to one. By 1980 it had declined to 2.72 to one and in 1990 it was 2.49 to one. Smaller average household size results in an increased demand for housing units now and, if these trends continue, into the future.

Besides the fundamental economic factors that influence housing prices, psychological factors may also be important. These can lead to a mentality that foresees a continuing housing boom and escalating housing prices. This explanation gives a great deal of weight to people's expectations of rising housing prices, apart from any fundamental economic reasons.²⁸ That is, if people believe that the boom in housing prices will continue, there is a very good chance that it will.

Despite this psychological interpretation, the current economic downturn in New England shows that economic forces are the key to explaining the pace of housing price escalation in an economy.

Mortgage Rates

The cost of owner-occupied housing is not only the price of the house itself. Houses are paid for over a long period through mortgages. Mortgage interest rates have a great impact on the cost of housing services. Examining the course of Vermont mortgage interest rates from 1975 to 1990 shows that between 1975 and 1980, rates drifted upward, rising from 8.5 percent in 1975 to 12.0 percent in 1980.²⁹ When a new Federal Reserve policy of tightening the money supply to fight inflation was implemented in October 1979, interest rates shot up by 81 percent between 1978 and 1982, rising to an unprecedented level of over 17 percent in the early 1980s. As inflation receded, the Federal Reserve lowered rates somewhat, but in 1990 they were still very high by historical standards and 20 percent higher than they were in the mid-1970s.

Median Family Income

Housing affordability usually relates to a family's income. It is therefore important to examine not only the costs of obtaining a home, but the ability of families to meet those costs. A consistent series on family income was obtained from data supplied by the Vermont Department of Taxes. I used the median adjusted gross income of married taxpayers — about 50 percent of all Vermont income tax filers — to find that Vermont median incomes rose steadily over the period of the study, although the increases were small in the recession of the early 1980s.³⁰

The rapid income growth from 1984 to 1989 is particularly noteworthy. After sluggish growth in the early part of the decade, median income grew by 40 percent over those five years. Inflation was relatively low, so the real (inflation-adjusted) growth was quite high. This growth is due in large part to the growth of the state's economy, although the 1987 data partially reflect the immediate impact of the 1986 tax reform law. Over the fifteen-year time span of this study, reported median family income tripled, from \$12,000 in 1975 to \$35,400 in 1990.³¹

Down Payment Impedes Home Ownership

There is no doubt that housing prices in Vermont are higher than they have been in the past, but so are incomes. Because home prices rose faster than incomes, especially from 1984 to 1989, coming up with enough funds for a down payment and closing costs became a serious impediment to purchasing a home for first-time buyers. Those who already owned homes usually did not have this problem, as they could use the equity in their property toward a down payment. Closing costs as a percentage of income have fluctuated dramatically over the period of this study and are less than they have been in several of the years examined. However, a 20 percent down payment on a house (as a percentage of income) increased steadily during the boom years before showing a slight decline in 1990. Relative down payment costs in

1990 were about 15 percent higher than the level of 1985 and 10 percent higher than the median level of the past fifteen years. This has occurred because, especially from 1985 to 1989, average housing prices rose faster than median income.

Affordability

The ability of Vermonters to bear the cost of buying a house is a function of the price of the house, the mortgage interest rate, and the income available to service the monthly payments. The monthly payment needed to finance an average house with a conventional mortgage³² has increased, rising from about \$300 per month in 1975 to \$1,000 in 1989 and 1990. However, this series is only part of the story, as it ignores the Vermont income gains that have allowed people to afford more expensive houses.

The key indicator of the affordability of an average home to an average Vermont family is the monthly payment as a percentage of income, and especially how that compares to its historical trend. Examining the percentage of income needed to service the monthly principal, interest, and property taxes in any one year does not answer the question of whether housing is relatively more expensive, and if it is, how much more expensive than it has been in the past. It is therefore more revealing to focus on the historical trend of the payment/income series — the average payment as a percentage of median income.

Examining the historical trend also avoids the questions of whether the data are totally accurate — whether the assumption of a 20 percent down payment for first-time home buyers is legitimate, whether the average housing price series is accurate, or whether the median income or mortgage rate data are totally accurate. For example, using a 10 percent down payment instead of a 20 percent down payment would not materially alter the trend of the housing cost series. As long as these three indicators follow the trend outlined in the earlier figures in this study, the trend itself will be accurate.

The series shows that housing costs for average Vermonters were fairly stable from 1975 to 1980. In the early 1980s, costs shot up dramatically, due primarily to the high mortgage rates of the period.³³ Although interest rates were still high by historical standards in 1985, the housing cost series since then has not exhibited the sharp peaks of the early 1980s. Indeed, the percentage of median income needed to service the mortgage on an average house has been remarkably stable from 1985 to 1990, fluctuating only slightly within a narrow band and showing a slight drop since 1988. In 1990 the series was still about 10 to 15 percent greater than the burden that prevailed in the late 1970s. As the economy continued to slow, it was highly likely that 1991 would show a further decline in average housing costs as a percentage of median income.³⁴

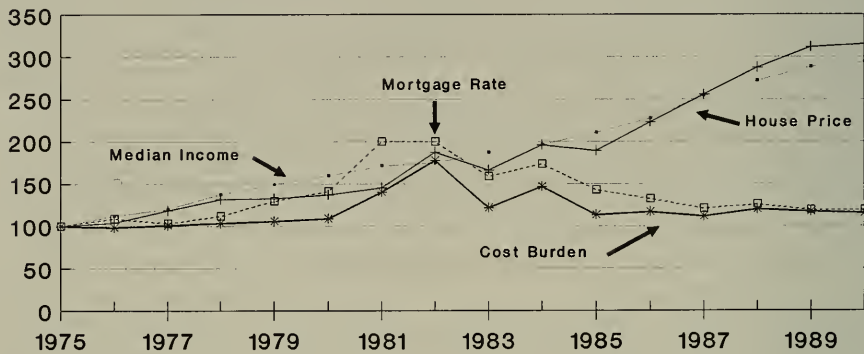
The Burden of Home Ownership Costs

Figure 1 portrays graphically much of the foregoing information. To show comparisons, all data series are indexed to a base level of 1975 = 100. Using an index value for each of the series has the same advantages as the historical trend analysis noted above. As long as any biases present in any of the data are consistent over time, the biases will not materially influence the comparisons to be made. Especially

given the upward bias in the average house price series (see Appendix A for an analysis of this bias), the index-number approach is a better way to analyze the trend of housing costs than examining housing costs as a percentage of income.

Figure 1

Index of Home Ownership Costs in Vermont 1975–1990



Source: See Appendix Table B1. All series indexed to 1975 = 100.

For most of the period, housing prices and family incomes grew at roughly comparable rates. Beginning in 1985, housing prices began to grow at a faster pace than income, a trend that ended in 1990. Mortgage rates show the greatest fluctuation, climbing steadily in the late 1970s and early 1980s, then showing a marked decline. When all three of these are combined to yield the monthly housing costs as a percentage of income (referred to as housing cost burden), it is readily apparent that, in general, mortgage interest rates are a key factor driving housing costs. Thus, the sharp rise in mortgage rates from 1980 to 1982 drove the cost burden up in those years. And the decline in mortgage rates that began in 1983 helped reduce the cost burden. However, while mortgage rates continued to decline through the mid and late 1980s, the escalating price of housing resulted in a housing-cost burden that has not shown a significant drop in the most recent period.

The cost of owner-occupied housing was lower in 1990 than in the early 1980s and higher than it was in the late 1970s. The reasons are twofold: while housing prices have increased substantially over the past several years, prices are only one component of total cost. The historically high interest rates of the 1980s had a far more significant impact on housing costs than did the increase in purchase prices. The rising price of houses — driven by escalating land prices — has been balanced, at least in part, by rising incomes.

The extent to which mortgage interest rates are crucial to an understanding of the cost of home ownership, as opposed to the price of a home, can be seen by analyzing

what would have happened in 1990 if interest rates had been higher or lower than they actually were. The 1990 rate, shown in the middle of Table 4, was 10.1 percent.

Table 4

**Impact of Higher and Lower Interest Rates on Vermont
Housing Costs in 1990**

Mortgage Rate	Monthly Payment	Payment as Percentage of Income	Income (1975 = 100)
8.125%	\$873	29.6%	99.5
9.125%	\$943	32.0%	107.4
10.125%	\$1,014	34.4%	115.6
11.125%	\$1,087	36.9%	123.9
12.125%	\$1,162	39.4%	132.4

Note: This analysis assumes 1990 levels of median income and housing prices.

If interest rates had been one percentage point lower in that year, monthly payments would have been \$70 per month less than they actually were. The housing-cost index would have been at a level lower than in any other year since 1979. If rates had been two percentage points lower, payments on an average house would have been \$140 lower and the housing-cost index would have been lower than any year since 1977.

If interest rates had been higher, monthly payments would have been correspondingly higher, as Table 4 also shows, and the housing-cost index would have approached or even exceeded the high levels of the early 1980s. Interest rates peaked in the spring of 1989 and have declined since then, gradually in 1989 and 1990 and more sharply since then. The data in Table 4 show that any increase in mortgage rates would pose a significant additional burden on the costs of buying a home.

Although the high interest rates of the 1980s explain a large part of the higher burden of Vermont housing costs on income during this decade, it is important to note that the divergence between incomes and house prices increased significantly in the middle and late 1980s. Figure 1 shows that since 1985, the average price of housing grew faster than median family incomes. This, as noted, was largely associated with the strength of the state's economy. Rapidly growing incomes, in conjunction with changing demographics, put large upward pressures on the state's housing market. The decline in mortgage rates during the 1980s mitigated some of the impact on the home-ownership cost burden, as Figure 1 shows. The sharp slowdown in the Vermont economy in 1990 and 1991 will give way to sluggish economic growth in the early years of the 1990s, bringing with it stagnation in housing prices. Although this bodes well for housing price pressures, the lowering of income growth will mitigate the trend of a lower housing-cost burden.

Policy Implications

The major finding of this study is that the housing-cost burden for owner-occupied housing in Vermont is about 10 to 15 percent higher than it was in the late 1970s. This number may seem low, given general perception about the escalating price of

housing. Further, the question of whether 10 percent or 15 percent is a high or low number should be analyzed carefully. This figure gives the monthly housing cost as a percentage of monthly income. Increasing housing-cost burdens by 10 to 15 percent translates into a significant additional financial burden for a median-income household. For example, a 1990 median-income family had a monthly income of about \$3,000. If the 1990 housing-cost burden had been identical to that of the late 1970s, the average monthly housing cost burden would have been about \$100 to \$150 lower than it actually was. Because that burden was not at those levels, there was a sizable additional expenditure for an average family.

That housing costs are 10 to 15 percent, and not 50 or 100 percent higher than they were fifteen years ago has important implications for state policies designed to deal with housing issues. The first is that the magnitude of the problem is not insurmountable. A 10 or 15 percent increase is easier to deal with than one of 50 or 100 percent. The second is that the housing problem has differential effects on the housing market. While the median-income family faces 10 to 15 percent higher housing costs, relative to income, than it did in the late 1970s, federal cutbacks have imposed far higher cost increases on lower-income individuals who had, during the 1960s and 1970s, relied on the federal government for direct housing assistance far more heavily than did middle-income individuals and families.

Policies designed to deal with housing must confront both these issues, and Vermont has in place housing programs that do both. The Vermont Housing Finance Agency helps middle- and lower-middle-income families by reducing down payment and interest rate charges on homes. It also helps to finance low-cost rental units, thereby picking up some of the supply that the federal government financed before the 1980s. The Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund also focuses on a broad stratum of housing assistance. By targeting its spending at rental as well as owner-occupied housing, the fund provides assistance to areas of the housing market that have been hardest hit by federal cutbacks and to those who have been most affected by the rapid rise in Vermont housing prices.

Cautionary Notes

Owner-occupied housing appears to be a goal that is just out of reach of many average-income potential home buyers — although their income increases, other costs increase faster. Many feel that they are merely treading water rather than getting closer to the goal of home ownership. Moreover, it is the down payment and closing costs necessary to purchase a house, not the overall cost of meeting the monthly payments, that have risen most sharply in the past four years.

It should be noted that financial markets have addressed some of these issues. This study has assumed a standard fixed-rate mortgage with an 80 percent loan-to-value ratio. In the recent past, this has been changed. Banks and other financial institutions have created many types of mortgages to address some of the problems of first-time (and other) home buyers. Variable-rate mortgages with lower interest rates reduce monthly payments. And financial institutions are offering different types of mortgages with lower down payments than the 20 percent assumed here. Government programs to lower interest rates, such as those undertaken by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, address the problem of relatively high interest rates as

well as the need to reduce down payments. They also offer more flexible underwriting guidelines. All of these have served to alleviate some of the problems discussed above.

Although there is no doubt that the costs of home ownership are higher than their historical average, when higher incomes are factored into the equation, these increases do not appear to approach crisis proportions for median-income Vermonters, but do pose a significantly higher burden for them. The cost rises have certainly increased frustrations over the inability to purchase a home of the size and quality that a family might want and have also made the goal of home ownership an increasingly impossible dream for lower-income Vermonters.

A number of competing trends make the future course of housing prices uncertain. Continued federal tax law granting of numerous tax preferences to home owners will serve to continue to enhance the attractiveness of home ownership relative to other investments. Repeal or significant limitation of the tax deductions will reduce the upward pressure on housing prices.³⁵

Changing demographics also have an uncertain impact on the future course of housing prices. The baby-boom generation will rapidly give way to the "baby-bust" generation — those born from the mid-1960s into the 1970s — reducing pressure on housing prices.³⁶ However, with the baby-boom generation remaining in their homes as they reach retirement age (beginning in about 2010), housing prices will tend to move in the opposite direction. The retirement of many older Vermonters to warmer climates will tend to moderate this effect — as long as they do not hold on to their Vermont homes as temporary summer residences.

The economic growth of Vermont is even more difficult to forecast than these demographic factors. However, Vermont's per capita income is still about 7 percent below the national average and further below the New England average. It may therefore grow closer to the national average, but it is unlikely that the state or region will resume the frenetic pace of economic growth they experienced in the middle and late 1980s. Any growth that returns in the middle 1990s is likely to be much more modest.

Vermont's housing boom paralleled that of other New England and northeastern states. In nearly all of them, the rapid escalation in housing prices of the mid to late 1980s has slowed or even stopped. Prices, including those in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, have all fallen from their peaks in 1988 and 1989. Vermont's housing prices have also declined since 1990.

Finally, interest rates play a crucial role in analyzing the cost of housing. Forecasting the future direction of interest rates is far beyond the scope of this study. Interest rates, both real and nominal, are very still by historical norms, in large part owing to the uncertainties created by the large federal budget deficit. The success or failure of national macroeconomic policy will therefore greatly affect the ability of many Vermonters to purchase and finance their own homes. ■

This article, written while I was Vermont state economist in the Governor's Office of Policy Research and Coordination, in no way reflects the views or opinions of that office or the state of Vermont.

Appendix A

What Is the Price of an Average Vermont House?

The price of a house is an important component of the total cost of housing; highly visible, it is used by many as the main indicator of housing's cost and affordability. Despite the importance of this piece of data, many different data sources can be used to obtain an estimate of the "average" selling price of owner-occupied housing in Vermont. This section analyzes the different measures of the average price of housing and points out the strengths and weaknesses of each measure.

The most widely used source of data on average price, the series compiled by the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB), yields one of the highest average price measures. Compared to the measure that should be the most accurate (Vermont property transfer tax data), the FHLB estimated price is at least 15 percent higher than the true median price. Caution should be used with the FHLB data as it may significantly overstate the true price of a Vermont house.

Good Measures of Housing Price

The issue of housing affordability is largely determined by measuring the price of an owner-occupied house. This measure can be useful in tracing the pattern of prices across regions of the state and through time. A good measure of housing prices should have a number of features: the data set should be accurate; a sample should be large enough to guarantee the statistical accuracy of the measure; a small sample should be checked for accuracy and consistency with other measures.

The data source should allow comparisons to be made across counties and through time, allowing analysis of regional differences; to the extent that housing prices vary across regions, housing may place more of a burden on income in some areas than others. The comparison through time would allow a similar analysis to be done in a temporal framework.

The measure of central tendency should be expressed as a median (the figure at which an equal number of house prices are above and below) as opposed to an arithmetic mean (the sum of house prices divided by the number of houses). The median is much less sensitive to extreme values at either end of the distribution. In this case, very expensive houses tend to push up the mean. The median is a much more accurate representation of the price of a typical house for a typical Vermont home buyer.

The housing price measure should include only primary, owner-occupied homes. If possible, it should break out condominiums and mobile homes in order to get a better picture of these different types of houses.

Table A1 shows alternative measures of average and median prices of Vermont houses.

Vermont Housing Price Sources

Federal Home Loan Bank

The most commonly used measure of the price of housing is the series provided by the Federal Home Loan Bank, which the Vermont legislature used in its study of the Vermont housing market.³⁷ The FHLB measures average housing prices by taking, on the first to the fifth of each month, a sample of home sales of houses of all types financed by four Vermont lending institutions that report to it. The series has the advantage of being fairly comprehensive and, more important, it gives the longest historical series on housing prices in the state, with a consistent data set beginning in 1975. One limitation is that the Vermont sample is small and may be less reflective of all housing sales than those of other states.

Table A1

**Alternative Measures of the Average Price of
Vermont Owner-Occupied Housing**

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)	
Year	FHLB Average Price	FHLB Median Price	21 Median Century 21 Median Price	Property Valuation Average Price	Chittenden County Average Price (single family detached)	Property Transfer Tax Average Price Res	Res & Vac	Property Transfer Tax Median Price Res	Res & & Vac
1975	\$38,700	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1976	\$40,200	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1977	\$45,900	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1978	\$51,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1979	\$51,300	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1980	\$53,100	—	—	—	\$59,300	—	—	—	—
1981	\$56,300	—	—	—	\$64,500	—	—	—	—
1982	\$72,600	—	—	—	\$64,700	—	—	—	—
1983	\$64,300	—	—	\$49,400	\$63,900	—	—	—	—
1984	\$75,800	\$66,300	—	—	\$69,300	—	—	—	—
1985	\$73,300	\$67,000	—	\$56,800	\$75,400	—	—	—	—
1986	\$86,200	\$78,000	—	—	\$93,300	—	—	—	—
1987	\$98,900	\$85,700	\$83,600	\$65,100	\$107,300	\$84,900	\$91,600	\$75,000	\$76,000
1988	\$111,200	\$95,500	\$96,500	—	\$120,900	\$99,000	\$103,600	\$85,000	\$86,500
1989	\$120,550	\$112,200	\$101,300	—	\$138,900	\$108,700	\$113,100	\$93,000	\$95,000
1990	\$121,900	\$105,000	—	—	\$136,200	\$108,200	\$110,300	\$92,000	\$92,000

Note: FHLB is the Federal Home Loan Bank. Property Transfer Tax data: Res = primary homes and mobile homes with land. Res & Vac = all residential plus vacation homes.

The FHLB also calculates a median value; that series, which began only in 1984, is shown in column 3. Comparison of the median and the average values are revealing. The average price series is 10 to 15 percent greater than the median selling price. This is consistent with the finding that extremely expensive houses skew the average (or mean); the median is a much better measure of typical prices. We can conclude from this alone that the FHLB average-price series is an overestimate, owing to statistical biases derived from use of the average instead of the median.

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) has compiled a series on average (mean) housing prices in that county. This series is based on all sales made there through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). The series, which begins in 1980, includes only single-family homes; the data after 1986 exclude condominiums. One major drawback of this series is that it is for only the one county. The CCRPC compiled the data by going through MLS books and calculating an average price for each year.³⁸

Column 6 shows the average price paid for a house in Chittenden County, as calculated by the CCRPC. This series does not go back as far as the FHLB series, but it shows a similar trend. Chittenden County prices rose by 130 percent from 1980 to 1990. The FHLB series shows an identical increase over the same period. Other than for 1982, the average FHLB price ranges from between 80 percent and 100 percent of the county average. That the two series are fairly consistent gives further support to the use of the FHLB series as the best available data source on Vermont housing prices, subject to the stated limitations.

Property Valuation and Review

The Division of Property Valuation and Review of the state of Vermont's Tax Department lists the fair market value of all property in the state, broken down by type of property. The property valuation data have the desirable feature of availability at the town level of disaggregation. This is the only series that gives the actual value of all properties, as opposed to the value of only those properties sold. This series, which is available for 1983, 1985, and 1987, includes all R1, R2, and mobile home properties.³⁹ Although this series attempts to measure the fair market value of all properties, not just properties sold, it does not seem to be an accurate measure of the true price of purchasing a house in the state.

Century 21

Century 21 Real Estate, a national chain, has data on median sales prices by state for 1987 through 1989.⁴⁰ Its data are limited by the use of only those properties sold through the chain, about 1,400 in Vermont in 1988. This source does, however, give a median, as opposed to a mean, sales price. The limited number of years for which this source is available makes it difficult to use for an analysis of Vermont housing price trends over an extended period. Nonetheless, the Century 21 median is roughly equal to that of the FHLB, giving support to the accuracy of the FHLB sample.

Property Transfer Tax

The state of Vermont levies a tax on the transfer of all real estate. Although this tax has been in effect for some time, only since 1987 have the data become available in a way that allows statistical inferences to be made. The data are quite extensive and, like the property valuation data, can be obtained for each town in the state. The data are also broken down into various types, including R1, R2, mobile homes with and without land, two types of vacation homes (under and over six acres), and other types of property. The property types used are identical to those used by Property Valuation. A major problem with the data as reported in Table A1 is that they relate to property transfers that were processed in each calendar year, not those which actually occurred during the year. Major delays in reporting to the Tax Department can cause significant problems in the raw data.

Two different measures of the average transaction price are given. The first series, in column 7, shows the average price of residential transactions, including R1, R2, and mobile homes with land. While this is the best measure of the true price of owner-occupied housing, it is not consistent with the FHLB series. The latter measures the price of all units, including vacation units. The second shows the property transfer tax data, including vacation properties, and is therefore comparable to the FHLB average-price data. Because the property transfer tax data are of better quality than the FHLB data, which are based on a sample, they can be used to measure FHLB's biases. The transfer tax data show that the FHLB average series overstates the true average price of housing by about ten percentage points. Although we can perform this analysis only for 1987 and 1988, there is no reason to assume that the sample bias is not consistent throughout the entire period.

The Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs performed a special analysis to determine median prices from property tax data. Its data, based on the same group of property used in the FHLB sample, and the most accurate available, revealed that the FHLB series overstated the median price of residential and vacation property by 30 percent. The analysis clearly supports the argument that the FHLB series overestimates the true median house price that confronts a typical Vermont home buyer.

At present, the FHLB series provides the only data with which to compare housing prices over a long period of time. Limitations of that data should be noted whenever the

series is used. Future studies of the housing market in Vermont and in regions within the state will be able to use the much more accurate property transfer tax data base that is published annually by the Vermont Tax Department. Unfortunately, that data series is not comparable to the FHLB series.

Appendix B Data Series Data Series Used in Text Figures

Table B1

(1) Year	(2) U.S. CPI	(3) Median Income Vt. Married Taxpayers	(4) Index of Vt. Income	(5) Vt. Federal Mortgage Rates	(6) Index of Rates	(7) Average House Price	(8) Index House Price	(9) Payment P&I With 20% Down	(10) Monthly Payment+ Property Taxes	(11) Total Payment as % of Income	(12) Payment/ Income Index	(13) Down Payment Plus Points	(14) Down Payment Plus Closing Costs/Income	(15) Down Payment Index
1975	100.0	\$12,036	100.0	8.5	100.0	\$38,700	100.0	\$238	\$298	29.7%	100.0	\$7,790	64.7%	100.0
1976	105.8	\$13,440	111.7	9.3	108.8	\$40,200	103.9	\$265	\$328	29.2%	98.3	\$8,115	60.4%	93.3
1977	112.6	\$14,466	120.2	8.8	102.9	\$45,900	118.6	\$289	\$361	30.0%	100.7	\$9,255	64.0%	98.8
1978	121.2	\$16,533	137.4	9.5	111.8	\$51,000	131.8	\$343	\$424	30.8%	103.4	\$12,825	77.6%	119.9
1979	134.9	\$17,967	149.3	11.0	129.4	\$51,300	132.6	\$391	\$470	31.4%	105.6	\$15,480	86.2%	133.1
1980	153.1	\$19,193	159.5	12.0	141.2	\$53,100	137.2	\$437	\$517	32.4%	108.8	\$11,151	58.1%	89.8
1981	169.0	\$20,622	171.3	17.0	200.0	\$56,300	145.5	\$642	\$717	41.7%	140.3	\$12,386	60.1%	92.8
1982	179.3	\$21,019	174.6	17.0	200.0	\$72,600	187.6	\$828	\$927	52.9%	177.8	\$16,698	79.4%	122.7
1983	185.1	\$22,510	187.0	13.5	158.8	\$64,300	166.1	\$589	\$679	36.2%	121.6	\$14,146	62.8%	97.1
1984	193.0	\$23,609	196.2	14.8	173.5	\$75,800	195.9	\$755	\$860	43.7%	147.0	\$16,676	70.6%	109.1
1985	199.9	\$25,343	210.6	12.1	142.6	\$73,300	189.4	\$609	\$711	33.7%	113.1	\$16,126	63.6%	98.3
1986	203.7	\$27,347	227.2	11.3	132.4	\$86,200	222.7	\$670	\$790	34.7%	116.6	\$18,964	69.3%	107.1
1987	211.0	\$30,618	254.4	10.3	120.6	\$98,900	255.6	\$709	\$845	33.2%	111.3	\$21,758	71.1%	109.8
1988	219.9	\$32,750	272.1	10.7	125.5	\$111,200	287.3	\$825	\$972	35.6%	119.8	\$24,464	74.7%	115.4
1989	230.4	\$34,680	288.1	10.1	119.1	\$120,600	311.5	\$855	\$1,008	34.9%	117.2	\$26,521	76.5%	118.2
1990	242.9	\$35,399	294.1	10.1	119.1	\$121,900	315.0	\$865	\$1,014	34.4%	115.6	\$26,818	75.8%	117.1

Sources: For raw data. All indexed values are 1975 = 100.

Column

- (2) U.S. CPI is Consumer Price Index from 1989 Statistical Abstract of the United States (Washington, 1989).
- (3) I constructed Median Income Vermont Married Taxpayers from data listed in Vermont Tax Statistics (annual).
- (5) Vermont Federal Bank Mortgage Rates are in effect on July 1 of each year for conventional, fixed-rate, thirty-year mortgages with 80 percent loan-to-value ratio. For some years in the late 1970s, twenty-five year terms were used.
- (7) Federal Home Loan Bank Average House Price is based on unpublished data furnished by the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston.
- (13) Down Payment is based on 20 percent down payment; points are those required by Vermont Federal Bank.

Notes

1. Vermont Department of Health, *Public Health Statistics Bulletin: Vermont Population and Housing Estimates 1988* (November 1989).
2. Table 1 is not strictly a measure of home ownership, defined as the percentage of the population living in houses that they own. The data in the table refer to the percentage of housing units that are owner occupied, which is a slightly different concept. A federal study found that Vermont was one of only ten states that recorded an increase in home ownership from 1984 to 1989. Robert Callis, *Homeownership Trends in the 1980's* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, December 1990).
3. The price of a house is simply the purchase price. Home-ownership costs, as used here, include the purchase price, financing costs, and property tax payments.
4. *Burlington Free Press*, February 22, 1989, 1.
5. Data from the Federal Home Loan Bank. See Appendix A for a detailed discussion of this source.
6. Joint Housing Study Committee of the Vermont Legislature, *Report of the Housing Study Committee* (January 1989).
7. National housing price series exhibit neither this downward trend in 1983 or 1985 nor the large jump in 1982. There is no apparent reason for Vermont to show such different trends from the national average, which leads to a small sample size explanation for the pattern.
8. The consumer price series used here is the U.S. Consumer Price Index. There is no Vermont-specific consumer price index.
9. This analysis applies to new houses. Existing house prices are largely driven by the price of new houses, but they have the additional component of capital gains, which accrue to the seller of the house.
10. The housing price source is the FHLB series; construction material costs are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index series, "Materials and Components for Construction"; average wages for contract construction workers come from Vermont Department of Employment and Training, *Vermont Employment and Wages* (annual). Land price as used here includes all improvements to the land, development costs, and other nonwage and non-materials costs.
11. This conclusion is based on the following equation:

$$P_h = \alpha P_l + \beta P_t + \delta P_m$$

where

P_h is the growth rate of the price of housing

P_l is the growth rate of the price of construction labor

P_t is the growth rate of the price of land

P_m is the growth rate of the price of construction materials

α is the share of labor costs in the price of housing (28%)

β is the share of land costs in the price of housing (30%)

δ is the share of materials costs in the price of housing (42%)

and

$$\alpha + \beta + \delta = 1$$

Substituting the weights given above and the compound growth rates given in the text into the equation, all the parameters in the equation, except for P_t are known. Solving for P_t yields a compound annual growth rate in land values of 14.5 percent.

12. An overall average state and federal income tax rate of 25 percent was used for this analysis. Using a marginal tax rate would likely reduce this rate of return. However, without knowledge of the income of landowners and stockholders, we cannot estimate marginal tax brackets.
13. Any comparison of return on investments must include an analysis of risk, because high rates of return are associated with higher levels of risk. This can clearly be seen in the context of the real estate market in Vermont and all of New England in the first years of the 1990s.
14. The number of nonvacation homes is from the Vermont Department of Health's annual *Population and Housing Estimates*. Total property sales are from unpublished data on property transfers from the Vermont Department of Taxes.
15. "Report of the Act 200 Study Committee," November 15, 1988, Report 4, 1.
16. See *Reducing the Development Costs of Housing: Actions for State and Local Governments* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, August 1979, 42-46).
17. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1980 Census of Housing*, reports 15,231 mobile homes in Vermont. Vermont Division of Property Valuation and Review (unpublished data) reports 20,213 mobile homes in 1988.
18. Vermont Department of Public Health, unpublished statistics.
19. For a concise discussion of these demographic effects at the national level, see Glenn H. Miller, Jr., "Demographic Influences on Household Growth and Housing Activity," in Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, *Economic Review*, September/October 1988, 34-48.
20. Ken Jones, *Vermont Population Projections 1990-2005*, State of Vermont, Office of Policy Research and Coordination, December 1989.
21. Vermont Department of Health, *Public Health Statistics Bulletin, Vermont Population and Housing Estimates, 1988*, November 1989.
22. It should be noted that these data do not account for the conversion of vacation units into year-round units. These units, while not used as primary residences by Vermonters, are not counted as vacation units. This measurement problem may explain the apparent stability in the ratio of vacation homes to the total number of housing units.
23. The tax advantages of home equity loans gives an additional tax benefit to home ownership, as the deductibility of other personal interest expenditures is being phased out.
24. It should be noted that these two tax advantages alone account for \$48 billion in federal tax revenue forgone and dwarf the \$8 billion in federal expenditures on subsidized housing programs in 1990 (*Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 1992*).
25. Several European countries tax all or part of this imputed income.
26. In addition, the tax reform law did not end the tax deductibility of mortgage interest payments on vacation homes, as many reformers had urged. This has led to an increased demand for vacation homes for the same reasons as those discussed above.
27. Note, however, that because the 1986 Tax Reform Act reduced marginal income tax rates, it reduced the tax advantages of home ownership. Therefore, first-time owners now benefit less than they did in the past, when marginal rates were higher.
28. See Karl Case and Robert Shiller, "The Behavior of Home Buyers in Boom and Post-Boom Markets," *New England Economic Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, November/December 1988, 29-45, for an excellent analysis of this phenomenon.
29. The rate used is Vermont Federal Bank's thirty-year, fixed-term mortgage after a 20 percent down payment, as of July 1 of each year.
30. Appendix A discusses the use of median and average as a measure of the central tendency of a series. Other sources of data on median or average incomes do not extend as far back as the series used here. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development county median income series goes back only to 1980, and there are some years in the 1980s for which we do not have data at the statewide level. The U.S. Commerce Department series on

per capita personal income is an average figure and would have to be adjusted for changing average size of families.

The Vermont Tax Department data set is a median figure, which has more desirable features than an average measure, but it does have several drawbacks: it is sensitive to changing definitions of adjusted gross income and it excludes families who do not file Vermont income tax forms and single-parent families. The latter demographic group, which has been growing over the past decade, has lower-than-average family income. The Tax Department series does have the advantage of excluding students and other households that should not be included in a median family income series. It is also based on actual reported income, as opposed to the income estimates that HUD and the Commerce Department use. The median family income figure used here tracks the per capita income estimate well.

31. The increase in this series over 1975-1989 is 188 percent. This is less than the 256 percent increase in Vermont per capita personal income over the same period, which implies that the series is a reasonable and conservative estimate of income growth.
32. This is the monthly payment, including property taxes, on a conventional thirty-year, fixed-rate mortgage with a 20 percent down payment.
33. The earlier discussion of house price data noted that the 1982 and 1983 average housing prices are suspect; the estimate for 1982 is probably too high and for 1983 too low. Given those data problems, it is probably safe to conclude that the housing cost burden in 1990 was about 20 percent below the level of the early 1980s.
34. Because the FHLB series on housing prices was discontinued in 1990, I cannot extend my analysis beyond that year.
35. These tax-related issues are being examined as measures to reduce the federal budget deficit. There is, needless to say, a great deal of opposition from real estate interest and other groups, just as there was during the early discussions over what eventually became the 1986 Tax Reform Law.
36. A 1989 study concludes that changing demographics in the United States will result in a decline of about 4 percent in real (after inflation is taken into account) housing prices over the next twenty years, sending real housing prices to their lowest level in forty years. N. Gregory Mankiw and David Weil, "The Baby Boom, the Baby Bust, and the Housing Market," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 19, no. 2 (May 1989): 235-258.
37. See *Report of the Housing Study Committee*, Joint Housing Study Committee of the Vermont Legislature, January 1989.
38. This exercise could be replicated for each MLS in the state; with some coordination, the data could be computerized and median values for each county, as well as for the state, could be calculated.
39. R1 properties are primary homes on fewer than six acres; R2 are primary homes on six or more acres of land. Both exclude vacation properties.
40. This series includes vacation homes as well as residential sales.

The Boston Harbor Cleanup

Paul F. Levy
Michael S. Connor

Boston Harbor earned a widespread reputation as “the dirtiest harbor in the nation” during the 1988 presidential campaign. Well before that campaign began, though, efforts were under way to reduce the amount of pollution entering the harbor. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority was created in 1985 to undertake a massive public works program — including construction of a 1.3 billion-gallon-per-day sewage treatment plant and a sludge fertilizer processing plant — to end the decades-old practice of dumping sewage wastes into the ocean. The program will also cause water and sewer charges to rise dramatically during a fifteen-year period.

The project has raised a host of environmental and public policy issues: How should sludge by-products be disposed of or used by society? What is the proper placement of the effluent outfall for a sewage treatment plant of this magnitude discharging into Massachusetts Bay? What is the appropriate level of treatment to apply to wastewater? How can ratepayers be assured that their money is being spent on the highest environmental priorities?

This article represents the opinions and conclusions of the authors, not necessarily those of the MWRA.

Thanks to George Bush’s 1988 presidential campaign advertisement, most people know Boston Harbor only as one of the dirtiest in the country. What the political ad failed to mention, however, are the remedial steps being taken to transform the harbor into a useful and attractive resource for the Boston metropolitan area. In this article, after explaining how the harbor became so polluted, we describe the current cleanup program, analyze some of the most important issues that must be resolved in the course of that program, and discuss the benefits of the different cleanup elements to the environmental health of Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay.

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History

Boston Harbor and the major rivers leading into it — the Charles, Mystic, and Neponset — have been used for the disposal of sewage wastes for hundreds of years. Looking back to the colonial era, the historian Eliot Clarke observed:

The way in which sewers were built at this time was, apparently, this. When some energetic householder on any street decided that a sewer was needed there, he persuaded such of his neighbors as he could to join him in building a street drain. Having obtained permission to open the street or perhaps neglected this preliminary, they built such a structure as they thought necessary, on the shortest line to tide-water. . . .

[By the 1820s] such changes have taken place in the contours of the city, through operations for reclaiming and filling tidal areas bordering the old limits, that, from being an easy site to sewer, Boston became one presenting many obstacles to the construction of an efficient sewer system. . . .

As a consequence, the contents of the sewers were dammed back by the tide during the greater part of each twelve hours. To prevent the salt water flowing into them, many of them were provided with tide-gates, which closed as the sea rose, and excluded it. These tide-gates also shut in the sewage, which accumulated behind them along the whole length of the sewer, as in a cesspool; and, there being no current, deposits occurred. The sewers were, in general, inadequately ventilated, and the rise of sewage in them compressed the foul air which they contained and tended to force it into the house connections. . . .

Although at about the time of low water the tide-gates opened and the sewage escaped, the latter almost immediately met the incoming tide, and was brought back by it, to form deposits upon the flats and shores about the city . . . Under certain conditions of the atmosphere, especially on summer evenings, a well-defined sewage odor would extend over the whole South and West Ends of the city proper.¹

A great leap forward was made in the 1880s when construction of a massive collection and transport system began. Its purpose was simple: to take wastewater away from Boston and the communities along the Charles and Mystic rivers out to where it would do no immediate harm, to Boston Harbor. From the time of its completion in 1904 until after World War II, the metropolitan area's wastewater "treatment" system consisted of nothing more than this collection and transport system. Millions of gallons per day of untreated sewerage were dumped into the harbor.

The system was improved following that war. In 1952, a primary treatment plant was built on Nut Island in Quincy to handle wastewater flows from the southern portion of the metropolitan area. In 1968, another primary treatment plant was constructed on Deer Island, near Winthrop, to handle the northern system. The Nut Island and Deer Island treatment plants were designed to treat average daily flows of 112 million and 343 million gallons per day (mgd), respectively, and maximum peak flows of 280 mgd and 848 mgd.

Problems soon arose. The treatment plants at Nut and Deer islands were owned and operated by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), a state agency subject to the budgetary control of the state legislature. Also responsible for the metropolitan area parks, roadways, skating rinks, and swimming pools, the MDC was never able to attract sufficient legislative interest in its nonpark functions (that is, the sewer-

works) to garner sufficient funds to maintain and upgrade the new sewage treatment plants. In short order the new plants became old plants subject to breakdowns, inadequate staffing, and poor performance. Plants that might have provided a reasonable level of treatment on their construction were soon inadequate to handle even the initial flows for which they were designed, much less the growth that occurred in the metropolitan area during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Furthermore, even when the plants worked, they never eliminated the discharge of sludge into the harbor. Upon its separation from the plant's influent, the sludge was simply held in storage tanks pending discharge on the outgoing tides.

The next major development was the passage of the federal Clean Water Act in 1972. The act prescribed the use of secondary treatment for metropolitan areas such as Boston, unless a waiver of that requirement was granted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The MDC applied for such a waiver, called a 301(h) waiver after the section of the act in which it is set forth, arguing that the benefits of secondary treatment were not worth its costs. Years of delay ensued, with inaction by the EPA on the waiver request, a resubmittal by the state with more information, more inaction by the EPA, and finally a denial of the waiver. In all, the waiver process lasted from 1977 to 1984.

Meanwhile, the lawsuits began. There is the legendary story of William Golden, the city solicitor for Quincy, who was jogging along Wollaston Beach through what he at first thought was seaweed and jellyfish. Golden was horrified to find, on closer examination, that the seaweed and jellyfish were actually untreated human feces. He convinced the mayor of Quincy to sue the commonwealth in 1982 for violations of state law with regard to wastewater discharges into Quincy Bay. In the interim, in 1983, the Conservation Law Foundation of New England started a federal court action against *both* the commonwealth and the EPA, the former for violating the Clean Water Act, the latter for not enforcing the act.

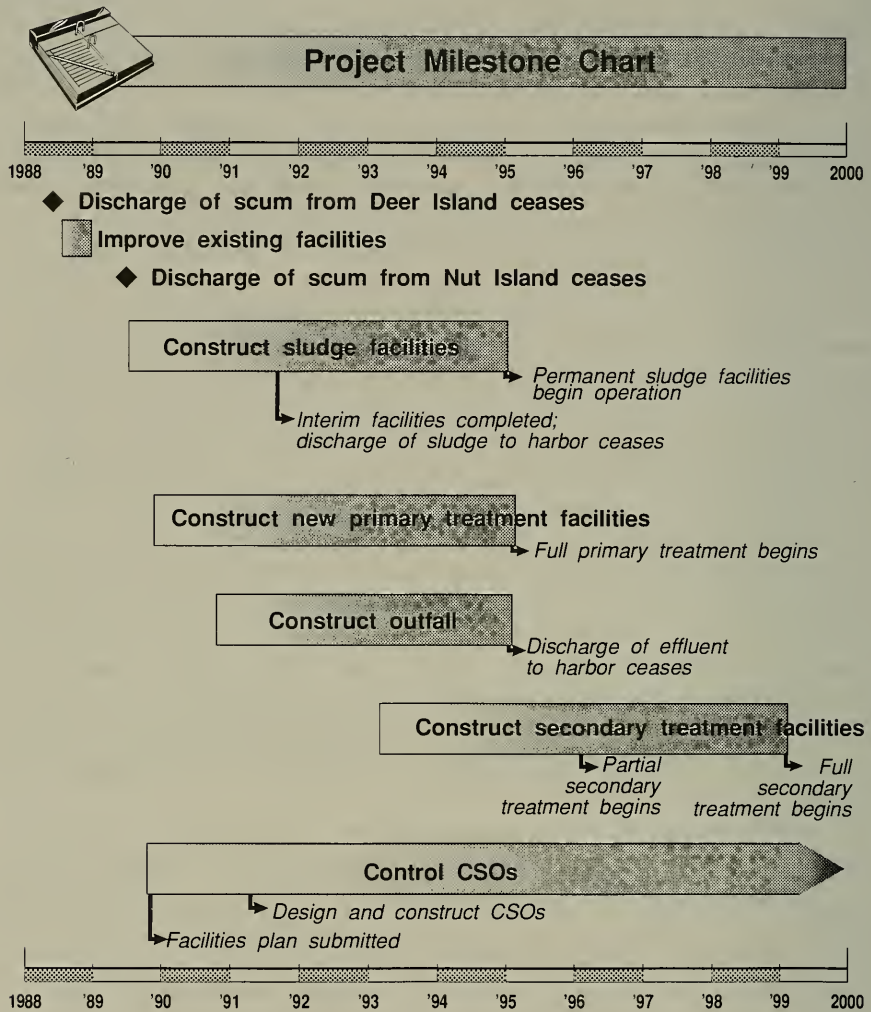
The federal case was held in abeyance while the state case proceeded. State Judge Paul Garrity, finding substantial violations of state law, ordered a moratorium on sewer hookups in the metropolitan area. He was immediately overruled by a higher state court, but his message scared the legislature enough that in December 1984 it created the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), an independent authority with the right to issue revenue bonds and raise rates to secure those bonds. The MWRA was given the responsibility to take over and rebuild the MDC sewer system.

Shortly after the MWRA came into being, the federal court case was revived. This time, in an interesting legal maneuver, EPA was a plaintiff rather than a defendant. The MWRA, as successor-in-interest to the MDC, found itself faced with a federal court order to carry out the provisions of the Clean Water Act. The parties and the court developed a detailed schedule in 1986 with more than one hundred milestones over the next decade against which MWRA's compliance is monitored monthly (see Figure 1).

The Plan

Thus began "the Boston Harbor Cleanup." The cleanup plan is relatively simple in concept: build a new primary and secondary treatment plant to handle wastewater

Figure 1



flows through the year 2025; end the discharge of sludge into Boston Harbor with some kind of landside disposal method; and resolve the problem of the combined sewer overflows (CSOs). These are the relief valves on the old combined storm and sanitary sewer system that release untreated sewage into the rivers and the harbor whenever there is heavy rain.

While simple in concept, implementation is somewhat more complicated, and very costly. The MWRA must:

- Build new primary and secondary treatment plants on Deer Island. The plants must handle an average flow of 500 mgd, and a peak flow of almost 1.3 billion gallons per day. The primary plant must be finished by 1995, the secondary by 1999 (see Figure 1).
- Maintain and improve the existing primary plant at Deer Island while the new facility is built around it (“immediate upgrades”).

- Decommission the old Nut Island plant in Quincy, but first drill a five-mile eleven-foot-diameter tunnel between Quincy and Winthrop, under Boston Harbor, to connect the southern sewer system to the new treatment plant at Deer Island.
- Drill a twenty-four-foot-diameter outfall tunnel for the effluent from the new treatment plant out 9.5 miles into Massachusetts Bay.
- Construct a sludge processing plant to manufacture fertilizer pellets from the sewage sludge by 1991.
- Move thousands of workers and tons of construction materials to Deer Island by boat.
- Build a series of tunnels and conduits to connect eighty-eight CSOs along three rivers and the harbor to the new treatment plant.
- Reduce groundwater infiltration and stormwater inflow to the system, which account for more than half of the influent flow in dry weather.
- Raise nearly \$7 billion from ratepayers in forty-three communities to pay for all of the above, *quintupling* water and sewer bills over a fourteen-year period.
- Stay on schedule or be subject to federal sanctions, including daily fines of up to \$10,000 per violation of the Clean Water Act.

Issues to Be Resolved

The scientific and engineering issues surrounding this complex wastewater treatment project have more than a passing academic interest. While virtually all the components of the plan require a sound scientific and engineering basis, the decisions to be made have serious financial implications for the ratepayers of the Boston metropolitan area, and they also have important environmental consequences for the harbor, Massachusetts Bay, and a number of landside locations. In the following sections, we discuss some of these issues.

Sludge

The purpose of a sewage treatment plant is to separate the solids in the waste stream from the water, purifying the latter while creating a residue of treated sludge. At the new Deer Island treatment plant, like most others in the country, sludge will be produced by two processes. The primary portion of the treatment plant will produce sludge through a physical process, sedimentation, in forty-eight stacked settling tanks. The secondary portion of the treatment plant will use a biological process, the infusion of oxygen into a nutrient-rich suspension consisting of twelve aeration tanks followed by seventy-two secondary clarifiers to separate still more sludge from the plant's influent. Both the primary and secondary sludge will then travel to twenty anaerobic digesters, where the volume of the sludge will be reduced by about 60 percent, creating methane gas in the process.

Each day 1.6 million gallons (200 dry tons) of sludge will leave the anaerobic digesters, requiring disposal in an environmentally sound manner. Basically, four options exist for the disposal of this much sludge. The first, now illegal, is the

method that was used for years by Boston, New York, and New Jersey: ocean disposal. While some scientists claim that ocean disposal,² if done properly, can achieve good environmental results, Congress has deemed otherwise, and the practice was ordered stopped by 1991.

Option two is to dispose of the sludge by landfilling or land application. While practical in some parts of the country (Omaha, Nebraska, and Tucson, Arizona, have large land application programs), the densely populated Northeast does not offer opportunities for this method of disposal. There is simply insufficient open space to satisfy the demands of the next several decades.

Option three is incineration. Sludge is an organic material with significant heat value. In theory, the combustion of sludge in an incinerator offers a payback in energy production and reduction of the volume of the material. In practice, though, incineration presents some difficulties. First, siting an incinerator in a metropolitan area is very difficult. Second, with ever stricter air quality standards, incinerators present an operational risk over their lifetime. When air quality regulations change, the incinerator may have to be shut down for an extended period to be retrofitted to meet the new requirements. Also, malfunctioning or improperly operated equipment can present real liability risks for the owner-operator of the facility. In Massachusetts two sewerage districts, South Essex and Greater Lawrence, were forced to close down their newly constructed sludge incinerators because of poor design and operations problems. Finally, while reducing the volume of sludge by a factor of seven, a sludge incinerator produces ash that must be disposed of in a landfill. Most of the toxics present in the sludge when it leaves the treatment plant become concentrated in the ash, making it a difficult material to handle and raising community concern over the siting of the landfill.

Option four for sludge processing is recycling, or beneficial reuse. This is the method chosen for the Boston Harbor cleanup. Two methods of reuse, composting and heat drying, were considered for Boston. In a sludge compost facility, wet sludge is dewatered on belt presses or in centrifuges. It is then mixed with a bulking agent (wood chips), aerated until the pathogens in the sludge are killed off, separated from the bulking agent, and sold as a soil conditioner. With the heat-drying process, the sludge is dewatered as above, then sent through a rotary kiln oven, which drives off excess water and kills the pathogens, producing a pellet or coffee-ground-type product that can be used as a soil conditioner or fertilizer or as a base for commercial fertilizer. Milorganite, produced by the Milwaukee sewer system for over sixty years, is a heat-dried sludge product.

The MWRA chose to rely on heat drying for sludge processing. An initial five-year contract was signed with New England Fertilizer Company, a private firm, to design and operate the fertilizer plant and to market the pellets produced in it. The agency chose to build the processing plant at the former General Dynamics shipyard site in Quincy. It completed construction of this \$87 million facility and was able to shut off the sludge discharge lines leading to the harbor on December 24, 1991.

Meanwhile, though, a regulatory issue has reared its head. During the last weeks of the Reagan administration, the EPA promulgated draft regulations that set such strict limits on the use of sewage sludge that sludge in most parts of the country could not be recycled as fertilizer. That the EPA might adopt such an approach, in the face of overwhelming support on the part of environmentalists, sewage treatment districts, and the public to recycle sludge into useful products, was extremely disturbing.

The proposed regulations received widespread criticism at public hearings, with comments focusing on the fact that they were entirely based on overly conservative human and environmental health risk assessments without considering their impact on beneficial reuse programs. The proposed regulations would have forced sewerage agencies to abandon existing beneficial reuse programs to comply with the stringent land application standards. Boston and New York, in the process of planning beneficial reuse programs to end ocean dumping, would have had their options seriously curtailed if the EPA regulations were adopted. Long-standing fertilizer production operations — in Milwaukee, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Dayton, and elsewhere — would have found that the years of experience they had accrued in recycling and the millions of dollars they had invested in fertilizer plants would have been put at risk by the regulations.

While there is legitimate public concern about the recycling of sewage sludge because it contains trace amounts of toxic metals and organics from industrial and household discharges into the sewer system, the problem is not intractable. Improvements in industrial pretreatment, combined with strict enforcement of environmental standards, have reduced and will continue to lower the levels of toxics in the waste stream. Likewise, public education programs and household hazardous waste collection centers will reduce the level of household toxics going down the drain.

In Massachusetts, for example, we have witnessed a substantial reduction in the level of toxics in wastewater. The MWRA has initiated a vigorous industrial pretreatment and source reduction program. Thanks in part to this program and concomitant actions at the federal level, the amount of heavy metals reaching the plant has declined from nearly five thousand pounds per day in 1982 to almost one thousand pounds per day in 1991 (see Figure 2).

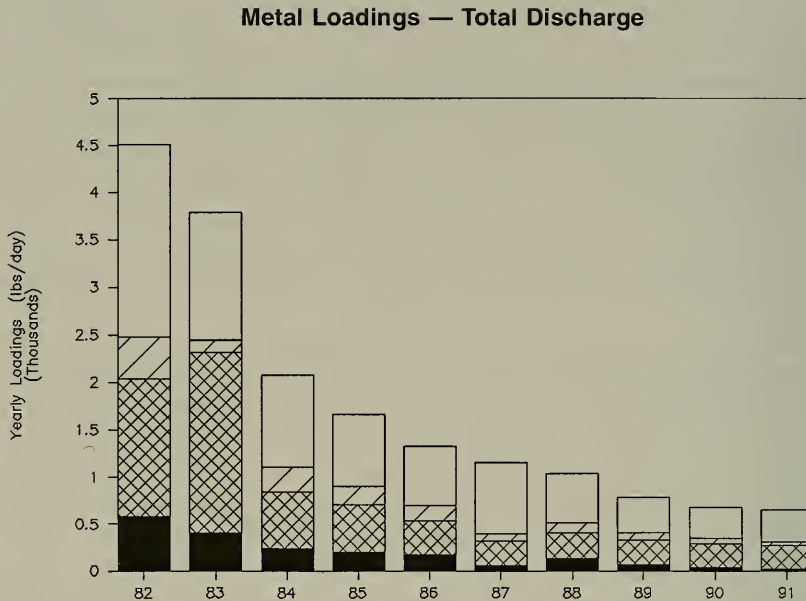
There will always be some level of toxics in sewage sludge, and some level of regulation is required to ensure that the concentration of these elements and the public's exposure to them is kept well within safe limits. Research indicates, however, that the levels of toxics in sludge have not presented any health threat when sludge products are used as fertilizer.³

Fortunately, in response to the massive number of public comments received, the EPA undertook a complete review of their proposed regulations. With help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and others, the EPA plans to issue regulations that will encourage the beneficial reuse of sludge products throughout the country.

Outfall

Perhaps the most challenging construction on the project involves the excavation and construction of the shaft, tunnel, and diffuser sections of the outfall. The effluent will travel through a 450-foot dropshaft into a 24-foot diameter tunnel bored through bedrock and terminating in a diffuser section about nine miles offshore (see Figure 3). The last 6,600 feet of the tunnel forms the diffuser, which consists of fifty-five vertical riser shafts 2.5 feet in diameter. Effluent will be discharged in 100 feet of water with a minimum initial dilution of about 180 during unstratified conditions approximately eight months of the year and 60 to 90 feet, depending on current speed during the most stratified conditions in late summer. Construction of the tunnel began in 1990. As of this date, the fifty-five vertical riser shafts have been completed, and the tunnel-boring machine has begun its long trek under the harbor.

Figure 2



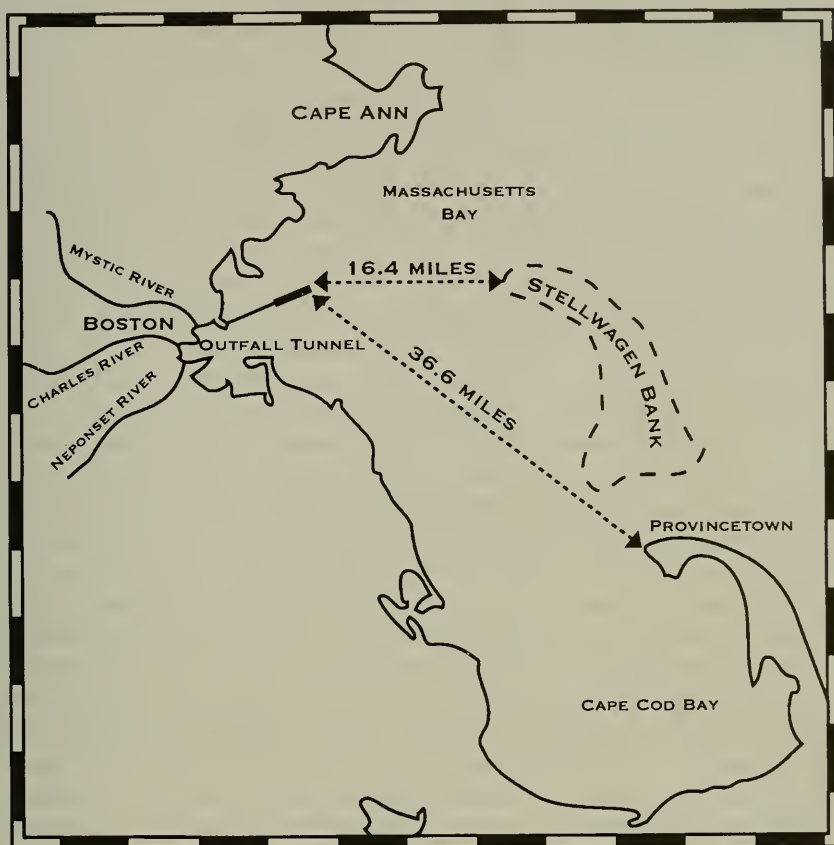
Ironically, the location of the outfall diffusers for the planned secondary facility is in the same general area proposed for a primary plant outfall in the original 301(h) waiver application. The selection of the effluent outfall location was based on the results of a \$4 million data collection program, including physical, chemical, biological, and geological oceanography. The effluent discharge area selected represents the most favorable mix of outfall site characteristics. It is well within the large-scale circulation patterns of Massachusetts Bay and therefore provides the most robust long-term mixing. It is in an area of limited potential sediment accumulation and thereby avoids problems associated with concentrating pollutants in nearby bottom sediments.

It is located away from intensely utilized near-shore resources, avoiding the potential for disruption. Finally, the location for the diffuser can be reached by a gravity flow effluent tunnel within a time frame consistent with the spirit of the court-ordered target dates for treatment facility construction.

How far offshore should a sewage outfall be? Besides meeting state water quality standards, the approved site is at the point where the marginal benefits (ambient dilution) increase only slightly, while the marginal costs rise steeply. The outfall location has been criticized by local residents as being too short and by Cape Cod environmentalists as being too long. Local communities are worried that the outfall might threaten their beaches and shellfish beds. Cape Codders are concerned that the proposed discharge poses a threat to marine mammal communities on Stellwagen Bank off the Cape's western shore more than sixteen miles away from the proposed discharge.

Figure 3

Discharge of the New Outfall



MWRA measurements of waves and currents indicate that the outfall diffuser is far enough offshore so that vigorous, variable currents will provide adequate dilution and avoid transport onshore toward beaches. Elevated concentrations of toxic contaminants in the water column will not be found near Stellwagen Bank. Field observations were used to calibrate and validate a numerical model of pollutant transport. The model predicts that effluent reaching the North Shore communities from the proposed diffuser site will be diluted 450-fold compared with the 50-fold dilution available for effluent discharged from the current location. In addition, the total amount of material that Boston will discharge to Massachusetts Bay will decline tenfold with the completion of secondary treatment and the cessation of ocean sludge discharge so that long-term chronic impacts on near-shore areas or Stellwagen Bank should be minimal.

In short, the water discharged at the outfall location should not have a detrimental effect on that part of Massachusetts Bay or on any other part of the bay. However, this is an issue that will be closely examined over the coming years. The MWRA has in place a harbor and bay monitoring program to acquire base-line data on the

condition of the receiving waters today. Those data will be compared with data collected after the operation of the new treatment plant to demonstrate conclusively the effect of the outfall on the bay. If, as expected, there are no adverse impacts, no further treatment will be necessary. If there are adverse impacts, it may be necessary for the MWRA to invest in more advanced forms of wastewater treatment at its facility on Deer Island or elsewhere.

Level of Treatment

The centerpiece of the cleanup will be the construction of the second largest wastewater treatment plant in the United States, with a capacity of 1,270 million gallons per day. The effluent discharged from the new secondary treatment plant will be dramatically cleaner than the effluent currently discharged from the Nut Island and Deer Island plants. It will have biological oxygen demand (BOD) and total suspended solids (TSS) concentrations of 22 and 21 mg/l compared with the 140 mg/l BOD and the 110 mg/l of TSS from the existing poorly functioning primary treatment plant at Deer Island. In short, the effluent will be clean enough that the seawater at the end of the outfall will meet the classification of "swimmable."

Although the issue of Boston's level of sewage treatment has been considered by the EPA and the federal court, there are likely to be further debates on this topic as water and sewer rates rise in the metropolitan area, particularly, what are the benefits of secondary treatment, and are they worth the \$880 million expected cost of the secondary treatment plant? Are there alternatives that are more cost-effective? Is there a way to meet the water quality standards established under federal and state law with less capital investment and/or lower operating costs? Since the MWRA is required by court order to build secondary treatment, we might view the debate as a scheduling issue: How should the construction of the various components of the Boston Harbor cleanup be scheduled to maximize environmental benefits for the next dollar spent? A similar issue is being raised in San Diego, where the city is being required to spend \$4.2 billion to build a new secondary treatment plant to replace its current advanced primary system. Several marine scientists from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography have criticized the decision as a diversion of money from solving more pressing water quality problems.⁴

Discussion

How clean will Boston Harbor be as a result of this cleanup program? To answer that question it is necessary to understand what the environmental problems are in Boston Harbor and how the different harbor cleanup program components are likely to affect those problems.

The major environmental impacts from sewage discharge are associated with the four major components of the discharge: toxic contaminants, pathogens, nutrients, and biological oxygen demand. Two of these problems are significant in Boston Harbor:

- Beach and shellfish bed closures owing to bacteria
- High concentrations of toxic contaminants in fish and sediments.

Because the shallow harbor is well flushed twice daily by large tidal flows, there have not been the serious incidents of hypoxia or anoxia caused by nutrient and BOD discharges that plague other estuarine waters, though some isolated portions in the inner harbor do violate water quality standards.

Boston Harbor beaches are closed about 15 percent of the time during the summer, and all shellfish beds are either closed or restricted to master diggers in wet weather. CSOs and storm drains discharge raw sewage to the harbor forty to eighty times per year during and after rainfalls. Fecal coliform bacterial concentrations can exceed 100,000 colony-forming units (CFUs) per 100 ml after heavy rains and persist for four days at concentrations above the standard of 200 CFUs per 100 ml.⁵

Boston Harbor received its moniker of "dirtiest harbor in the nation" on the basis of data collected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).⁶ The concentrations of toxic contaminants in fish tissue and sediments are uniformly high in Boston Harbor, similar to such other major urban harbors as New York and Baltimore. The major contaminants of concern are polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). PCB concentrations in MWRA discharges have declined dramatically in the last decade, but PAHs have not. While Boston Harbor is fairly typical of urban estuaries as regards concentrations of toxic contaminants, winter flounder from the harbor have a high incidence of liver neoplasms.⁷ It is presumed that this incidence is caused by sediment contamination.

Table 1 summarizes the extent to which the different MWRA programs — immediate upgrade of treatment plants, cessation of sludge dumping, new treatment plant facilities, new offshore outfall, and CSO facilities — will result in a cleaner harbor. The largest reduction in the water concentration of toxic contaminants will result from the construction of the outfall, because increased dilution will decrease the concentrations of toxic contaminants to about 10 percent of their concentrations in the harbor. Secondary treatment and improved primary treatment incrementally reduce toxic discharges by about the same amount, assuming that most toxic contaminants are associated with particles. These contaminants will then be part of the sludge distribution network in such dilute concentrations that they present minimal risk to the environment. Boston Harbor waters probably will meet water quality standards for toxic contaminants after the completion of these projects, since these waters currently meet most toxic standards most of the time. However, the contaminants remaining in the sediments will continue to provide some risk to fish and shellfish living in these sediments. To estimate the magnitude of this risk, MWRA is funding research to measure the extent of particle transport in Boston Harbor and the flux of metals and organics from contaminated sediments.

Beach and shellfish closures will be significantly improved — in relative order of impact — by the (1) immediate upgrades at Deer Island, (2) CSO facilities, and (3) cessation of sludge dumping. Improvements to Deer Island pumping and operations have already reduced by about half the amount of untreated sewage entering the harbor.⁸ Since CSOs have much more impact on the beaches and shellfish beds ringing the harbor, and controlling CSOs would have a more dramatic impact on the visible health of Boston Harbor than secondary treatment, many local citizens are advocating acceleration of the CSO program. However, storm drains owned by the local municipalities account for a significant fraction of bacterial contamination, both from urban runoff and illegal sanitary connections to the storm drains. Without control of

Table 1

**Cost and Benefits of Various Harbor Projects
Extent of Improvement**

Project	Cost (in \$ Millions)	Toxics	Pathogens	Nutrients / BOD
Immediate Upgrades	33	<5%	Untreated discharges reduced by half	Small improvement to BOD
Sludge	650	30% less discharge to the harbor	30% less to the harbor, with major benefit to Winthrop	Improvement, but current problem not large
Primary	1,000	30% less discharge to the harbor	No impact for normal operations: major improvements from ending diversions	50% improvement, but potential problem at outfall site
Secondary	880	30% less discharge to the harbor	Little impact	Some improvement near discharge, but may worsen algal problems in far field
Outfall	360	Same amount, but concentration will be 10 times less in Mass Bay because of dilution	Pathogen concentration will be 10 times less and far from beaches	Oxygen declines will be less, but the site may be more sensitive
CSOs	2,200	About 5% less discharge harborwide, but larger local impact near overflow	One hundred-fold improvement near discharge; 25% reduction in beach closings harborwide	10% improvement near overflow
Stormwater	?	Less than 5% improvement harborwide	One hundred-fold near discharges. 40% reduction in beach closings harborwide	Negligible

Note: Impacts based on estimated load reductions.

these other sources of pollution, even complete elimination of CSO discharges will not result in a clean harbor.

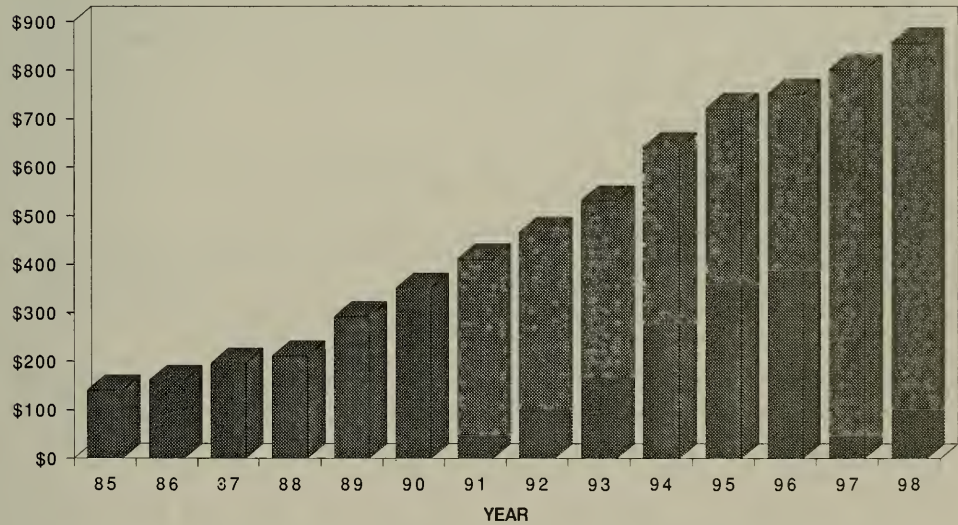
Dissolved oxygen concentrations should be sufficient in both Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay with the new outfall to meet water quality standards regardless of level of treatment. The long-term impact of increased coastal discharges of nutrients on the kinds of phytoplankton growing in the region is more problematic. In the past several years, coastal waters around the world from the Adriatic Sea to the Irish coast to Peconic Bay have suffered from the outbreak of nuisance algal blooms. The assimilative capacity of coastal waters for nutrient discharges is a challenging research question.

This cost-benefit comparison shows that improving current facilities, ending sludge discharges, and using the new outfall have significant benefits for their costs. On the other hand, stormwater control will mostly benefit localized areas at a proportionally higher cost. The marginal benefits of full secondary treatment as compared to CSO remediation or nutrient removal are more difficult to quantify and tend to focus on different issues in different areas (for example, beach closures in the harbor versus ecosystem effects in the bay). A more quantitative agenda of priorities for these programs will depend on the final design of the CSO facilities and early results from MWRA's ongoing monitoring of the harbor and the bay.

Despite uncertainty surrounding the issues discussed above and others that are certain to arise in any environmental project as large and as complicated as the Boston Harbor cleanup, the MWRA has made significant progress and remained on schedule. The project has already resulted in a cleaner harbor. MWRA spent more on capital improvements in its first four years of existence than the MDC was permitted to spend in the previous twenty years. A number of "immediate upgrade" projects required to improve the interim performance of the treatment plant have been completed. These projects have already decreased the amount of grit and scum discharged to the harbor by four thousand gallons per day and reduced the discharge of coliform bacteria to the harbor. The decline in toxic discharges has resulted in winter flounder in the harbor with dramatically reduced incidence of fin erosion and liver disease.⁹ In addition, the increased pumping capacity at Deer Island has reduced the

Figure 4

MWRA Household Water and Sewer Bills



number and amount of CSO discharges dramatically, so that area beaches are the cleanest they have been since measurements began in the 1930s.¹⁰ But the largest improvement to the harbor occurred when sludge dumping ended in late 1991. A later improvement will occur in 1995 with the completion of the outfall and the first phase of plant construction.

Since the authority's inception in 1985, water and sewer ratepayers have seen their average bills rise from about \$140 a year to over \$500 a year. That yearly price tag is expected to reach \$750 in current dollars by 1996 and \$855 in current dollars by the year 1998 (see Figure 4). Two thirds of the capital costs is determined by the court schedule. Federal and state cost-sharing will contribute only a small percentage of the total cost, so most of the costs of the Boston Harbor cleanup will be borne by the ratepayers. Unless the federal government gets back into financially supporting the Clean Water Act, ratepayers will face extraordinarily high sewerage rates. Given these projected increases and the constraints of borrowing money in capital markets, the MWRA will need to carefully weigh the expected benefits of various aspects of the cleanup program to give the highest priority to investments that yield the greatest water quality improvements. ■

Notes

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3. Technical Committee of Northeastern Regional Research Coordinating Project NEC-28, Soil Research, "Criteria and Recommendations for Land Application of Sludges in the Northeast," Bulletin 851 (University Park: Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station, 1985); L. E. Sommers, R. C. Lehrman, H. C. Selznick, and C. E. Pound, "Principles and Design Criteria for Sewage Sludge Application on Land," in *Sludge Treatment and Disposal* — vol.2, *Sludge Disposal*, EPA-625/4-78-012 (Cincinnati: EPA, 1978), 57–112.
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5. A. C. Rex; K. E. Keay; W. M. Smith; J. J. Cuva; C. A. Menzie; M. S. Steinhauer; and M. S. Connor, "The State of Boston Harbor: 1991" (Boston: MWRA, 1992).
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10. Ibid.

New York Revised

Shaun O'Connell

The works discussed in this article include:

- City of the World: New York and Its People*, by Bernie Bookbinder.
192 pages. Harry H. Abrams, 1989. \$25.00.
- New York, New York*, by Oliver E. Allen. 365 pages. Atheneum, 1990. \$27.50.
- New York Intellect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City,
from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time*,
by Thomas Bender. Alfred A. Knopf, 1987. \$25.00.
- The Heart of the World*, by Nik Cohn. 371 pages.
Alfred A. Knopf, 1992. \$21.00.
- The Art of the City: Views and Versions of New York*, by Peter Conrad.
Oxford University Press, 1984. 329 pages. \$18.95.
- After Henry*, by Joan Didion. 319 pages. Simon and Schuster, 1992. \$22.00.
- Literary New York: A History and Guide*, by Susan Edmiston and Linda D. Cirino. 409 pages.
Peregrine Smith Books, 1976, reissue, 1991. \$15.95.
- Our New York: A Personal Vision in Words and Photographs*, by Alfred Kazin (text) and
David Finn (photographs). 224 pages. Harper & Row, 1989. \$35.00.
- Intellectual Memoirs: New York 1936–1938*, by Mary McCarthy. 114 pages.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992. \$15.95.
- Brightness Falls*, by Jay McInerney. 416 pages. Alfred A. Knopf, 1992. \$23.00.
- Manhattan '45*, by Jan Morris. 273 pages. Oxford University Press, 1987. \$17.95.
- Jazz*, by Toni Morrison. 229 pages. Alfred A. Knopf, 1992. \$21.00.
- Clockers*, by Richard Price. 599 pages. Houghton Mifflin, 1992. \$22.95.
- In Pursuit of Gotham: Culture and Commerce in New York*, by William R. Taylor.
212 pages. Oxford University Press, 1992. \$24.95.
- New York in the Fifties*, by Dan Wakefield. 212 pages. Houghton Mifflin, 1992. \$24.95.
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What is a city? Well we might ask, for today the city as we have known it — particularly New York City, which has long reflected the state of the nation at its best and its worst — is a disintegrating entity, a depleted idea, a diminished thing. The decline of the city, as emblem and actuality, is eroding the nation's stated commitment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. For it is the gritty city, particularly New York City, rather than the fabled New England village that has

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stood as the last best hope for American democracy, the place where “aliens” — the huddled masses from across the Atlantic and the internal emigrés from the heart of the country — have arrived with great expectations, and it is the city that has transformed them into committed members of the body politic. As America abandons its cities, while protecting its urban and suburban enclaves of wealth, commerce, and high-income residences, its poor citizens are sentenced to a life of diminished expectations, danger, disease, and despair that flares into occasional violence and self-destructiveness.

Lewis Mumford, distinguished urban analyst, articulated his urban ideal in *The Culture of Cities* (1938).

The city, as one finds it in history, is the point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community. It is the place where the diffused rays of many separate beams of life fall into focus, with gains in both social effectiveness and significance. The city is the form and symbol of an integrated social relationship: it is the seat of the temple, the market, the hall of justice, the academy of learning. Here is where human experience is transformed into viable signs, symbols, patterns of conduct, systems of order. Here is where the issues of civilization are focused: here, too, ritual passes on occasion into the active drama of a fully differentiated and self-conscious society.¹

Mumford stressed the goals of unity, cohesion, and coherence: for him the city should compose, out of its diverse residents and elements, one living and nurturing organism. However, he lived long enough to see his ideal vision crumble and his beloved Manhattan, the personification of that ideal, decline and fall from grace.

Born in Flushing, Queens, in 1895, Mumford, who called himself “a child of the city,” grew up on Manhattan’s Upper West Side in a “typical New York brownstone,” though *all* of the city became his landscape of discovery: the streets were the leaves of grass through which he walked, and the port of New York stood as his frontier, his Walden Pond. “Not merely was I a city boy but a New Yorker, indeed a son of Manhattan, who looked upon specimens from all other cities as provincial — especially Brooklynites,” he confessed in *Sketches from Life* (1982). Despite its problems, deriving from vast inequities of wealth, the New York of Mumford’s youth offered “a moral stability and security” which, by the 1970s, when New York City nearly went bankrupt, was long gone. As a distinguished elderly man, Mumford looked back on his old New York with wonder and ahead to an increasingly horrific New York with despair. “More than once lately in New York I have felt as Petrarch reports himself feeling in the fourteenth century, when he compared the desolate, wolfish, robber-infested Provence of his maturity, in the wake of the Black Plague, with the safe, prosperous region of his youth.”²

Mumford’s memoir, so full of resonant remembrances of things past, traces his development from youth, before World War I, to coming of age as one of America’s most influential cultural critics, between the wars, then to the alienated sense of a “displaced person” in modern, plague-ridden Manhattan. He is blunt, explicit, and denunciatory, like an Old Testament prophet, in his assessment of contemporary New York. “The city I once knew so intimately has been wrecked; most of what remains will soon vanish; and therewith scattered fragments of my own life will disappear in the rubble that is carried away.”³ Sunk also, like the fabled Atlantis, was Mumford’s

ideal vision of the city, "where human experience is transformed into viable signs, symbols, patterns of conduct, systems of order."

We now know that our cities — particularly New York City, America's Gotham or Metropolis, a city in desperate and perpetual need of rescue, as represented in popular culture by *Batman*, *Superman*, or even *Ghostbusters!* — have arrived at the point of the maximum diffusion of power and fragmentation of culture, a dissolving center of centrifugal forces that results in chaos and entropy. There, indeed, is where the issues and seemingly irresolvable problems of civilization are focused; there, too, are acted out the dramas of a fully differentiated and self-conscious society now in disarray and decay.

In the cities the economic gap between rich and poor is dramatized. Since World War II, small manufacturing plants and sweatshops, which for more than a century have exploited but also sustained immigrants and other members of the underclass, have disappeared, like a receding tide (often to foreign shores), and these groups, composed largely of minorities, have been left behind, stranded on the beach, to fight one another over what little remains — as blacks attacked Koreans in south central Los Angeles during the riots of spring 1992. There, in the republic's center cities, things have fallen apart; the center has not held. (New York did not burn after the LA riots, to the relief of Mayor David Dinkins and other city leaders, though their euphoria, predicted Eric Pooley in *New York* magazine, might well be short-lived — "a pleasant diversion, really, from the numb deathwatch that municipal governance has become: the sad wait for the next round of service cuts, the costly posturing of union settlements, the brave reforms proposed but never enacted."⁴ Indeed cities, particularly New York City, no longer constitute centers of culture or commerce in the American consciousness. There, in New York City in particular, the resonant and oft-repeated but increasingly relevant words of W. B. Yeats haunt: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst / are full of passionate intensity."⁵

Things may seem even worse than they are in contemporary New York. The city, long represented in hyperbolic terms — in images of exaltation or degradation, with no middle ground — has recently most frequently been represented as a grim wasteland by the local media outlets, which compete to outdo one another in reports of savagery and mayhem. In a city of some 18 million people, some forty-five hundred reporters cover news; more than a thousand among them are foreign journalists who convey images of a diseased city to the world. Three tabloid newspapers and six television stations compete to report fires, drug crimes, murders, and all the other sensational stories that have come to be associated with urban life, particularly with New York life, such as it is.

As a result, says Jay Rosen, media critic and New York University teacher, the "image of the city as a hellhole [is] an image the rest of the country is only too happy to accept." Tabloids offer lurid headlines to attract attention — TORTURE IN THE SUBWAY; BODEGA TERROR; PAID ME IN SEX — and television stations run and rerun footage of urban horrors, a continuous loop of deranged urban images. In an era of declining readership of newspapers and increased competition for television ratings, New York journalism has, in the opinion of many, reached a new low. "New York is the trash journalism center of America right now," says media critic Richard M. Clurman. Though, reassuringly, ordinary life continues on the streets of New York, it has become difficult to be the bearer of good tidings about the city in the face of this media-driven, dystopian vision.⁶

New York certainly offers vivid examples for those who would exploit the city's horrors for political, publicity, and other purposes. The visitor entering New York City from its airport terminals confronts a museum of graffiti, refuse, and burned and cannibalized vehicles en route — along Grand Central Parkway, FDR Drive, both entrances to the Lincoln Tunnel, the access avenues to the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, and portions of the Long Island Expressway.⁷ Intimidating window washers, coercing tips, pounce on stopped cars at tunnel and bridge entrances. The first impressions of the city confirm visitors' worst fears.

In the 1992 presidential campaign, Republican strategists seized on New York City as an emblem of America's problems. Vice President Dan Quayle, speaking at a luncheon gathering at the Manhattan Institute in June 1992, warned that the election of a Democrat to the presidency would make the country like New York City, "filthy . . . dangerous . . . dying." Obviously the Republican campaign strategists believed that the image of New York as Sodom was sufficiently fixed in the American mind for the vice president to speak of it as another country, separate from the rest of the nation, as he did when he suggested that Democratic Party-dominated New York City was as inefficient as any Eastern European socialist nation.⁸

Indeed, Quayle made clear his belief that he spoke for most Americans when he equated New York City with criminals and with the Democrats who scheduled their presidential convention for New York, driven by what Quayle, who described Democrats as criminal, saw as "a strange compulsion to return to the scene of the crime" — New York City! "And as we watch this spectacle on our televisions, I suspect many Americans from around the country will be left with the conviction: We must not let them do to the rest of America what they have done to the people of New York City."⁹ For the vice president of the United States, the nation was divided into two geographic and moral realms: New York City and "the rest of America." When the Democratic convention was a success and the city did not explode in July, no apology or retraction was issued from the vice president's office.

The hit film of the summer of 1992, *Batman Returns*, played up the dystopian horrors of New York City. Film critic David Ansen so described the film's urban landscape: "Gotham City is certainly a nightmare town: New York reimaged . . . as a half-Gothic, half-Bauhaus three-ring circus of corruption."¹⁰ In the film, corruption seizes the city from all angles: a power-hungry businessman plans to suck power from the city; Penguin and his mob terrorize the city; Catwoman seduces and annihilates the city's men. All of the city's citizens, including its rescuer, are two-sided and divided characters. Of course Gotham, unlike New York City, *has* a rescuer, a caped crusader who will come to save its citizenry.

Writing in *The New Yorker*, reporter Andy Logan notes that "the film's message is that Gotham City is not a town [outsiders] would care to seek temporary house-room in." In the minds of most Americans, Gotham *is* New York City. "A seat in a movie theater may be as close as some out-of-towners feel they want to come to Batmanland, with its menacing, dark, often decrepit buildings and its overwrought residents — grotesque, violent, or just conveying the impression that they have fallen on hard times, with harder times ahead."¹¹ Logan does not accept this vision of New York, but the film does embody a pervasive American attitude toward the city.

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Some of the most eloquent contemporary commentators on the city are seized by exalted visions of great days gone, as Dan Wakefield is in *New York in the Fifties*.¹² The New York of the Eisenhower era — particularly the exciting life of writing and romance — centered around Greenwich Village: “La Vie Littéraire,” as John Dos Passos called it in his recollection of Village life and love in the 1920s — becomes Wakefield’s moveable feast, though he and his contemporaries now also view their New York as another Troy, a lost city available only through the excavations of memory and desire.¹³

The contemporary city, however, still has its celebrators. In *The Heart of the World*, journalist Nik Cohn reports on his dangerous and colorful odyssey: a tour along Broadway, the fabled Great White Way, from the tip of Manhattan to midtown.¹⁴ The colorful eccentrics he meets along the way — from pickpockets to transvestites, from faded crooners to starving actresses — speak to the openness and vitality of the city, but beneath the surface of his tribute a hint of chaos looms, as when he evokes a shimmering but fragmenting downtown skyline from the perspective of a boat in the harbor.

At first it looked no different from its movies. Then the stone wall began to separate, resolve itself into planes and curves and spirals, rank after rank rising up like a city of cards. Sunlight caught on glass and steel, squares melted into oblongs, bowbends into angles until, as we moved beneath it, the whole prodigious construct seemed to sweep up and shatter, kaleidoscopic, into myriad shards and flints, refractions, highlights, voids. At its heart, a bottomless gorge appeared: “Broadway.”¹⁵

A great emptiness appears at the heart of the world: in Manhattan, center city, U.S.A.

Of course, the white middle class has fled the cities for the rings of surrounding suburban towns; there an affluent population increasingly defines the national political agenda, evident in the candidates’ rush to appeal to the middle class, largely suburban, in the 1992 presidential election. “The United States is a nation of suburbs,” declared William Schneider in *The Atlantic Monthly*. “Most of the twentieth century has been dominated by the urban myth: the melting pot; New York, New York; the cities as the nation’s great engines of prosperity and culture. All the while, however, Americans have been getting out of the cities as soon as they can afford to buy a house and a car.”

As inner cities increasingly came to represent danger, the suburbs, or what Joel Garreau calls “edge cities,” came to stand for safety: they are walled villages enclosing a largely white, affluent population.¹⁶ If the suburbs, which hold the majority of voters, have come to represent the center of what it means to be an American, then the cities, along with their poor and minority citizens who vote in decreasing numbers, have become marginalized and minimalized in the American mind.

The fate of our cities only briefly became a national concern after the Los Angeles riots. Anna Quindlen, columnist for *The New York Times*, then returned to the section of Philadelphia in which she grew up to find that what once had been a coherent Irish-Catholic neighborhood had become a burned-out place: a poor black neighborhood marked by drugs, crime, and hopelessness. Do not ask who abandoned American cities, she admonishes. “We abandoned American cities.”¹⁷

In *City of the World*, Bernie Bookbinder, a celebrator of the contemporary city, reminds us of the crucial contributions to New York and the nation made by immigrants. His optimistic title derives, of course, from Walt Whitman: "City of the World! / (for all races are here, / All the lands of the earth / make contributions here)." ¹⁸ Yet Bookbinder, too, concludes his tribute on a note of anxiety for a city of increasing numbers of newcomers — in the 1980s nearly a million immigrants (nearly one in seven New Yorkers) came to New York City, particularly to Queens, seeking work; however, by 1991 the poverty rate in the city had risen to 25 percent — and job opportunities had declined. ¹⁹ "The prognosis, therefore, appears all too clear," predicts Bookbinder. "While the city prospers, the well-being of most of its people will decline." ²⁰

In his "State of the City Address" for 1992, New York City Mayor David Dinkins granted the sense of helplessness that many New Yorkers feel during a time of recession, but the mayor called for a renewed commitment to the *idea* of the city. "We must hold firm to our vision of this city. A city that stands for openness and compassion, for fiscal integrity and prudence, and most of all, a city that stands for opportunity — the opportunity that generations of immigrants understood when they saw Ellis Island for the first time." ²¹

However, that promise of opportunity quickly fades before the cold facts laid out in Jason Epstein's stark assessment, "The Tragical History of New York," published in *The New York Review of Books* in early 1992. New York City, he argues, includes an increasing number of devastated neighborhoods, like once-genteel Bushwick in Brooklyn. During the citywide power failure of July 1977, Bushwick was ravaged by rioters, looters, and arsonists. Perhaps the memory of that devastation kept Bushwick quiet while sections of LA burned, on May 1, 1992. ²²

Still, this drug-and-poverty-ridden region of Brooklyn, symbolic of so many similar sites in the city, has become a hopeless case, a disease from which its defeated citizenry can discover no cure; Bushwick is a closed world from which they can find no exit. The city, facing an operating deficit of \$333 million for fiscal year 1992, has neither the money nor the will to respond to its residents' dire needs; job opportunities for these increasingly desperate and angry citizens have evaporated. Since the 1950s the city's industrial base, largely located in its neighborhoods, has been declining at an accelerating rate. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, Manhattan has lost 189,000 jobs since 1989. As a result, "the mechanism by which New York has converted previous immigrant generations into tax-paying citizens no longer existed." Small manufacturing plants in the boroughs have been sacrificed for the expansion of white-collar jobs in the skyscrapers of Manhattan.

In Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, a novel that satirizes Reagan-era greed, Sherman McCoy, a successful investment banker, is asked by his daughter just what he *does!* Sherman's wife, who hates him, explains to their daughter: "Daddy doesn't build roads or hospitals, and he doesn't help build them, but he does handle the *bonds* for people who raise the money." ²³ That is, Wolfe's representative American of the 1980s helped to "build" a flimsy and flammable paper empire in downtown Manhattan, "a city boiling over with racial and ethnic hostilities and burning with the itch to Grab It Now." ²⁴

Jay McInerney's take on New York in the 1980s as a latter-day Great Barbecue was first articulated in *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984), a novel that showed his representative young American on the make and going bust in money-mad, drug-buoyed

Manhattan. In *Story of My Life* (1988), McInerney continued his catalogue of urban lives of quiet desperation through the testimony, in bummed-out lingo, by an affluent, drug-and-sex-numbed, directionless young woman. In *Brightness Falls* (1992), McInerney creates an even more convincing parable of Big City corruption, with exemplary young men and women who are caught up in the city's deterministic forces and gold fevers. "After nearly collapsing in bankruptcy during the seventies, their adoptive city had experienced a gold rush of sorts; prospecting with computers and telephones, financial miners had discovered fat veins of money coursing beneath the cliffs and canyons of the southern tip of Manhattan."²⁵

By the early 1990s the paper city still stood, though precariously and at the cost of the city's former neighborhoods. For Jason Epstein, "New York City is at risk of becoming the fortified island of opulence within a sea of misery and violence that many of its patricians now fear as they, along with the majority of New Yorkers polled by the *Times*, contemplate their escape."²⁶ New York City: America's revolving door.

Immigration and much more are celebrated in *Our New York*, text by Alfred Kazin and photographs by David Finn. They also open their book by citing from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*: "One's self I sing, a simple separate person. Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse." That is, these authors, too, affirm, in the face of the contrary evidence that they acknowledge, an ideal of the city as the center of individual opportunities and the site of democratic coherence. Kazin and Finn, too, are proud "children of the city."²⁷ For Kazin New York is nothing short of "'fabulous.' The fable signifies extraordinary power and will — 'the city of ambition,' Tom Wolfe calls it — and includes beggary, destitution, homelessness and crime on a scale that astonishes everyone but New Yorkers."²⁸ The "fabulous," then, is confirmed for Kazin by evidence of excess and includes the horrific. Finn's stark photographs support this double vision of the fabled city by juxtaposing images of opulence and degradation. Wary women walk the streets clutching their handbags in a grainy world of black and white. Citizens look suspicious, angry, or aggressive, shot against the backdrops of blasted neighborhoods or stark towers of commerce. Kazin and Finn thus celebrate New York City by incorporating its astonishing miseries into a forced affirmation.

Other writers recover and redefine New York by paying tribute to the greatest "child of the city," Walt Whitman, who boldly claimed, "This is the city and I am one of the citizens."²⁹ Yet who now, as did he, can affirm an adhesive union with *all* the citizens of "Manahattoes," as Whitman called his New York, much less identify with the disconsolate residents of the outer boroughs, including Whitman's beloved Brooklyn? A *New York Times* poll in November 1991 revealed that 58 percent of the residents interviewed predicted the city would be a worse place to live in ten to fifteen years, and 60 percent said they would prefer to live elsewhere if they had a choice. Pessimism permeated all groups, measured by income level, age, and boroughs.³⁰

Still, in the spring of 1992, several of the city's and the nation's best poets gathered in the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine to read sections from Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* to pay tribute to Whitman on the hundredth anniversary of his death. Lucille Clifton, Michael Harper, Galway Kinnell, Sharon Olds, Gerald Stern, C. K. Williams, and, of course, Allen Ginsberg, read from Whitman and the Cathedral Singers sang choral works based on Whitman's texts. In "I Love Old Whitman So,"

Ginsberg, that most Whitmanian of contemporary poets, had already tipped "the hat on my skull / to the old soldier, old sailor, old writer, old homosexual, old Christ poet journeyman, / inspired in middle age to chaunt Eternity in Manhattan."³¹ Now, once again, Walt Whitman, through these poets' voices, celebrated himself, loafed, and invited his soul to observe "a spear of summer grass" in this cavernous cathedral.

Some contemporary poets even thought Whitman's spirit mysteriously joined them. While Ginsberg was reading a passage in which Whitman "clarified and transfigured . . . forbidden voices, voices of sexes and lusts," a bat appeared from the darkness and circled the chancel, flying over a distracted Ginsberg. Kinnell alertly finished the poem, registering Whitman's instruction: "Missing me in one place search another, / I stop some where waiting for you."³² The crowd of some thousand people applauded this seeming revival of Whitman's presence and voice; indeed the program climaxed with a recording, on a wax cylinder, of what is believed to be Whitman reading from his poem "America" just before he died.

Whitman's "America" was an extension of a vision of inclusiveness that began on the streets of New York: "center of equal daughters, equal sons."³³ While some of the poets who read in the cathedral seemed bent on capturing Whitman as a model for their own purposes — particularly as a homosexual, urban poet — others took the more inclusive Whitmanian tack and celebrated him as a poet who transcended sexuality, gender, region, and time, just as Whitman said *he* wished to do in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." In Sharon Olds's eyes Whitman "didn't sing only as a white man or a gay man. He didn't even sing as a living man, as opposed to a dead man. He makes the human race look like a better idea." Olds even put the best interpretation on the bat that flew into their midst — a symbol, teasing these poets' imaginations for interpretation. "Did you see that bat?" she asked. "It was a sort of pale beigish bat. For me, it was both a bat and him."³⁴

However, seen from a less optimistic perspective, in 1896 not only bats but vultures were circling Greater New York, symbolically uniting the boroughs — an event that had been one of Whitman's fondest dreams of inclusion — while rats were invading its understaffed parks and its citizens were losing faith in the future of the city.

New York City, just as it is ever available for reconstruction, is now available for reconsideration. Though clearly in decline as a center of civilization and culture, the city remains vibrant, open anew for the inscription of significations, as an emblem for the state of the nation. Take the case of Elizabeth Hardwick's considerations and reconsiderations of the city, for example. More than a generation ago, Hardwick, then married to Robert Lowell, gave up on Boston, where they lived, and they returned to New York, memorializing their two-hundred-mile sea change in "Boston: The Lost Ideal" (1959). "In Boston there is an utter absence of that wild electric beauty of New York, of the marvelous, excited rush of people in taxicabs at twilight, of the great Avenues and Streets, the restaurants, theaters, bars, hotels, delicatessens, shops."³⁵

Now, one third of a century later, her assessment is under radical revision. In "New York City: Crash Course" (1991), Hardwick wonders why people still come to New York. "Once here, a lingering infection seems to set in and the streets are filled with complaints and whines of the hypochondriac who will not budge, will not face a fertile pasture." Images of disease (plague and infection) again serve as adequate tropes for postmodern New York. At best, the city just *is*, a place that has lost its

once powerful magic. "Here it is, that's all, the place itself, shadowy, ever promising and ever withholding, a bad mother, queen of the double bind . . . Nevertheless." Nevertheless, there is always Whitman to cite as a means of renewing one's covenant with the troubled contemporary city: "Give me faces and streets — give me these phantoms incessant and endless along the trottoirs!"³⁶ Whitman's lyrical lines serve as her incantation to protect the contemporary walker in the city from muggers, addicts, derelicts, beggars, and others — those incessant and endless phantoms who patrol the city's trottoirs! At the end of the day, Elizabeth Hardwick's "crash course" on the city sounds suspiciously like a minicourse on a city that has crashed!

In her foreword to Mary McCarthy's *Intellectual Memoirs: New York 1936–1938*, Elizabeth Hardwick looks back in wonder at all that time has wrought since McCarthy first came to New York — a place that can "excite intensely or suddenly as if by electrical shock," in McCarthy's words — from Vassar, at age twenty-two, in 1934.³⁷ This "very heaven" sense of discovery in the city was hard to recall and recreate for McCarthy — she died in 1989, at age seventy-seven — when she wrote this brief memoir during her final illness. For that we have to return to the elan of the opening pages of McCarthy's *The Group* (1963), a novel in which eight recent Vassar graduates gather, in June of 1933, in the Chapel of Saint George's Church, on Stuyvesant Square, to attend a wedding of one of their own. "They were in the throes of discovering New York, imagine it, when some of them had actually lived here all their lives."³⁸ That novel ends in a funeral of one of their own, all elan and sense of discovery of the wonders of New York having long since fled. When Mary McCarthy set out to "imagine it," her own New York saga tracked a similar arc. (As do the stories in her 1942 collection, *The Company She Keeps*, which cover the same period.)

Intellectual Memoirs begins by establishing McCarthy's marital, literary, and political innocence. She walked proudly down lower Broadway beside her first husband in a May Day 1936 parade, affirming Stalinist communism. Soon this Pippa passed into complex perceptions and compromising positions; she learned, under Malcolm Cowley's supervision, to write slashing reviews at *The New Republic* but also to write the right things about favored authors. At "Jim" Farrell's apartment on Lexington Avenue she became aware of the Stalin-Trotsky split in the ranks of American leftists and joined the staff of the Trotskyite *Partisan Review* while becoming the mistress of editor Philip Rahv. She moved to the Village and practiced "free" love. "I realized one day that in twenty-four hours I had slept with three different men." Yet she did not "feel promiscuous" and assures us she never contracted venereal disease.³⁹ For all that, her "innocent abroad" persona became shopworn on the streets of New York.

As Hardwick suggests, McCarthy constructed a retrospective myth upon her New York experiences, particularly when she personified Rahv, her lover, as Good, and Edmund Wilson, whom she married, as Evil. Why, then, did she betray Rahv by first having an affair with and then by marrying Wilson? The elderly, ill McCarthy could not imagine why, unless it was to sustain a foolish, logical consistency in ideologically obsessed New York of the 1930s. "So finally I agreed to marry him as my punishment for having gone to bed with him. . . . The logic of having slept with Wilson compelled the sequence of marriage if that was what he wanted. Otherwise my action would have no consistency; in other words, no meaning."⁴⁰

Indeed, she decided that her actions resulted in little meaning, for though that marriage lasted seven years, *Intellectual Memoirs* concludes with Mary's disillusionment during her honeymoon, when a drunken Wilson accused her brothers of being Stalinist agents who were out to get him! Her marriage, the memoir concludes, "never recovered."⁴¹ However, more than her marriage was damaged; the bright, electric promise of New York was tainted, although it was also made available for satiric or idyllic recreation in McCarthy's fiction, the form Wilson urged her to pursue. Finally, the city served Mary McCarthy as material for this ambiguous, reconstructive memoir.

It is time to reexamine the stories through which we know the city, to reevaluate the myths that embody the city, to revise the parables that hold the city's meanings. In "New York: Sentimental Journeys," Joan Didion attempts just that by reflecting on the story of the unnamed woman jogger who was brutally assaulted by "wilding" teens in Central Park at 1:30 in the morning of April 20, 1989. That woman became, in the press and in the eyes of many public figures and city officials, a personification of the New Yorker as "Lady Courage," a woman who embodies the best of the city's character.

For Didion "it was precisely in this confrontation of victim and city, this confusion of personal woe with public distress, that the crime's 'story' would be found, its lessons, its encouraging promise of narrative resolution." Didion, however, does not accept the Central Park mugging story as a sufficiently encompassing narrative to represent the city, and she finds those who gloss this story as a parable of individual courage in the face of urban terror to be perpetuators of a tradition of sentimental tales.

The insistent sentimentalization of experience, which is to say the encouragement of such reliance, is not new in New York. A preference for broad strokes, for the distortion and flattening of character, and for the reduction of event to narrative, has been for well over a hundred years the heart of the way the city presents itself: Lady Liberty, huddled masses, ticker-tape parades, heroes, gutters, bright lights, broken hearts, eight million stories and all the same story, each devised to obscure not only the city's actual tensions of race and class but also, more significantly, the civic and commercial arrangements that render those tensions irreconcilable.

As the stories of William Sidney Porter, or "O. Henry," focused on "individual plights" and ignored, according to William R. Taylor, "social and political implications," so, too, for Didion, did the story of the Central Park jogger deflect attention from recognition that the city is a fixed system of class and racial oppression. "In this city rapidly vanishing into the chasm between its actual life and its preferred narratives, what people said when they talked about the case of the Central Park jogger came to seem a kind of poetry, a way of expressing, without directly stating, different but equally volatile and similarly occult visions of the same disaster."

While many white New Yorkers saw the unnamed (and therefore all the more emblematic) woman as a victim of racial violence, many black New Yorkers saw the trial of the teens accused of her assault as the latest example of white victimization of blacks, who unfairly bore the blame for the city's problems. Thus,

Among the citizens of a New York come to grief on the sentimental stories told in defense of its own lazy criminality, the city's inevitability remained the given, the heart, the first and last word on which all the stories rested. We love New York, the narrative promises, because it matches our energy level.⁴²

The world-weariness reflected in Didion's essay testifies to her own disenchantment with New York City.

Didion's somewhat elliptical assessment of New York stories — they are at once sentimental in their reductiveness, available for glosses of opposed political implications, yet irresistible both in their drama and in their promises of revelation — brings to mind her contribution to the genre and her own evolving sense of the city. In "Goodbye to All That" (1967), Didion offered a narrative and gloss of her initial encounters with New York City: her own sentimental education in the city of broken dreams. She first came to New York, from California, as a guest editor at *Mademoiselle* during the summer of her junior year, in 1955; later she entered a *Vogue* contest, won it, and returned to the city. She was then guided by the same kind of reductive New York stories that she decried nearly forty years later.

As a young woman of twenty, Didion was "programmed by all the movies I had ever seen and all the songs I had ever heard sung and all the stories I had ever read about New York," which "informed me that it would never be quite the same again. In fact it never was." During her first days in Manhattan, all she could do "was talk long-distance to the boy I already knew I would never marry in the spring. I would stay in New York, I told him, just six months, and I could see the Brooklyn Bridge from my window. As it turned out the bridge was the Triborough, and I stayed eight years." New York, then, existed as a myth of expectation and intimidation before it became an educative experience for this "native daughter" from California; the city moved her from epiphany to revelation, from innocence to jaded awareness. Indeed, well into her eight-year stay, Didion retained a romantic attachment to the city, refusing to accept it as "real," still seeing it through the romantic, faraway haze of myth.

"New York is just a city, albeit *the* city, a plausible place for people to live." But for those from far away, "New York was no mere city. It was instead a romantic notion, the mysterious nexus of all love and money and power, the shining and perishable dream itself. To think of 'living' there was to reduce the miraculous to the mundane; one does not 'live' at Xanadu." It was not until she was twenty-eight that she began to become disillusioned, began to realize that "it is distinctly possible to stay too long at the Fair." New York, for Didion, was a proper place in which to be young and naive; when she grew up, her education completed, she got married and left for Los Angeles, where she and her husband wrote films in what most Americans believe to be the *real* Xanadu, Hollywood.⁴³

In "Goodbye to All That," Joan Didion treats her own story as exactly the same kind of informing parable of character in relation to place that she objected to in the popular responses to the Central Park jogger incident. New York City, it seems, encourages sagas of realization. For Joan Didion, as for the Central Park jogger, New York City became a stage set on which a lone woman played out her high drama; either she sang her own aria or she heard a chorus of commentators lift their voices to account for her significance. Though she resents the incorporation of the Central Park jogger assault into a sentimental narrative, Didion exploits her own past for just such an informing parable of the city. Calvin Trillin said. "The immigrant saga of

the fifties was *My Sister Eileen* — which became the Broadway musical *Wonderful Town* — rather than the *Daily Forward*. It was people coming in from the Midwest instead of from Europe.”⁴⁴

Didion and the Central Park jogger were both bright young women who came to New York City from Elsewhere seeking “wonderful town” and all the opportunities it offered; both, however, found the city, to varying degrees, a shocking revelation, and finally both left. In the Central Park jogger story, Joan Didion seems to have discovered a variant of her own coming-of-age-and-disillusionment-in-the-big-city tale.

By the time Didion wrote her bitter assessment of sentimental New York stories, she and her husband, writer John Gregory Dunne, were again living in Manhattan, on the Upper East Side, where they found they were *not* protected from assaults and muggings. New York as they had known it, she told Dan Wakefield for his recollection of New York in the 1950s, was gone — a transient place, a passing state of mind. Therefore, “I didn’t really think of it as coming back. I thought of it as leaving Los Angeles and making a change. It’s not ‘coming back’ to New York, though, because it’s nothing like it was.”⁴⁵ Old New York was gone, like a song that keeps saying “remember.” However, what does remain constant is her fascination for the vibrancy if not the accuracy of New York stories.

As a literary invention, New York City, it might be said, is an old story, though not so old as the myth of Boston, which goes back to John Winthrop’s “city upon a hill” trope, uttered *before* the passengers of the *Arbella* arrived in the New World, indeed before Boston itself was founded. Boston, then, was an image before it was a fact.⁴⁶ (The two cities, like Athens and Sparta, occupy different ends of an American symbolic spectrum. Boston is idealistic, paternalistic, judgmental, constricting, and obsessed with posterity; New York is pragmatic, adolescent, tolerant in its indifference, free, and more concerned with seizing the day than planning a future.)⁴⁷

New York, unlike Boston, existed in fact for more than a century before a network of literary associations and implications began to accumulate: a *voice* through which it would be known and understood; a dominant set of *characters* serving as the city’s representative men and women; a set of *images* that gave the growing city visual and psychic identity; and a *story*, or collection of informing parables, through which the city could be comprehended.

Washington Irving invented the literary idea of New York in his mock epic, *A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809). In the manner of Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal,” though with far more frivolous intent (setting out to amuse rather than reform), Irving perfected a persona whose style of narration undercut his apparent point. Diedrich Knickerbocker, confused and pompous, tried to make out of the history of New York an epic of national origins, an American *Aeneid*, but Irving made it clear, through his narrator’s bombast, that the history of New York amounted only to a farce.

Walt Whitman did incorporate the city into a national epic, *Leaves of Grass*. “Walt Whitman, a kosmos, of Manhattan the son” — so he celebrated himself in “Song of Myself” — was a poet who presumed to speak for all of the city’s citizens, indeed to chant for all Americans.⁴⁸ On the other hand, Whitman’s contemporary, Herman Melville — though they probably never met, Whitman and Melville were born on the same day, March 31, 1819, within what is now Greater New York City — portrayed

New York as a city of disillusionment (*Moby-Dick*), deprivation ("Bartleby the Scrivener"), and destruction (*Pierre*).

After the riots against the Draft Act in July 1863, which Melville watched from his rooftop on East Twenty-sixth Street, he wrote the bitter poem "The House-top," in which the city is portrayed as a landscape that literally lacks humanity. "The Town is taken by its rats . . . and man rebounds whole aeons back in nature."⁴⁹ So the debate has been engaged by New York's writers, who have contrived competing myths of the city, narratives which have ranged from mock epic denunciations to true epic tributes to parables and poems of denunciations. From Henry James's nostalgia for New York as a lost village centered at Washington Square, in *The American Scene* and *Notes of a Son and Brother*, to Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, New York has provided a stage set for writers who contrive passion plays on the American character.

In his introduction to the reissue of *Literary New York*, Robert Phillips recalls that when he came to New York in the early 1960s to become a writer, he and his wife walked the city's streets in search of literary landmarks. "It felt safe then, even late at night." Though New York feels distinctly less safe now, even at midday, Phillips finds an extraordinary range of evidence to support his claim that "New York has continued to inspire writers to create characters and plots set in and around Gotham, from Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958) to Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984)," suggesting that "literary New York constantly replenishes itself."⁵⁰

Whatever happens to the actual city, the contending myths of it continue to grow, fed by the imaginations of yet another generation of writers seeking significance and recognition in Manhattan. For all that, New York literature has changed, along with the city, as the contrast between the fiction of Capote, which celebrates the charms of a spontaneous young woman dancing through a safe city, and the fiction of McInerney, published thirty-four years later, which examines the crisis of a talented young man who was too easily seduced by the temptations of the Destructive City.

Jay McInerney's *Brightness Falls* (1992) is a novel framed as an elegy for the loss of innocence — the once-bright hopes of those who came to maturity during the 1980s and the failed promise of American life as it is embodied in its greatest city, New York. McInerney's young Americans, born in Eisenhower's 1950s, came of age in the sinister years of Nixon-Watergate and were buoyed by the Reagan-era delusions of grandeur; they participated in its compromises, and they suffered its consequences.

The novel, centering on three gifted, witty, and intelligent young men and women (a writer, a publisher, and a broker), is a parable on the death of the heart in public and private life. More than interlocking narratives of private failures, it is also a novel about the collapse of the American dream — the attainment of money, success, power, beauty, or other examples of grace — in the late 1980s. The Iran-contra hearings hum in the novel's background during the summer of 1987. More specifically, the novel analyzes that period leading up to and coming down from the stock market collapse (a 508-point plunge in one day) on October 19, 1987. America's best and brightest young men and women, McInerney's representative characters, get caught up in the decade's roller-coaster ride of bright promises and dark disillusionments. The novel, fittingly, is set in the vital center of this economic "action": New York City.

McInerney's title comes from a poem by Thomas Nashe, "A Litany in Time of Plague." In *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (1987), set in the New York social and financial community of the early 1980s, Tom Wolfe invoked plague imagery through allusion to Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death." Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* (1991), a novel about a young broker who becomes a serial murderer, invoked Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground* for his contribution to the genre of cautionary tales about the immoral selfishness and violence of our times; *American Psycho* is also set, fittingly, in New York City. In *Brightness Falls*, the Nashe poem is read during a memorial service at Saint Mark's in the Bowery for a gifted and successful young fiction writer, Jeff Pierce, who died of AIDS-related pneumonia.

In this novel, as in Nashe's poem, "the plague full swift goes by" and "brightness falls from the air." Corrine Calloway, who serves as the conscience of the novel, at first does not understand Nashe's trope, but then she suddenly gets it — "She could picture it clearly: brightness and beauty and youth falling like snow out of the sky all around them, gold dust falling to the streets and washing away in the rain outside the church, down the gutters into the sea."⁵¹ After brightness falls, darkness covers all.

In *Brightness Falls*, Jay McInerney recreates in the early 1990s the same sense of plangent loss and pique that F. Scott Fitzgerald articulated in his telling, mid-1920s myth of the city, *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald, more than half a century after his death, remains the principal source of inspiration for novelists of New York who wish to combine social satire with parables of revelation for their central characters, those innocents abroad in the mean streets of the city. In *Bonfire*, Wolfe went back to *Gatsby* for a central plot device (in both books a naive, philandering man takes the blame for a car accident for which his mistress was responsible) and for Fitzgerald's broad satire of the very rich.

In *Brightness Falls*, McInerney evokes *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), a novel in which Fitzgerald portrayed a bright young couple, Anthony and Gloria Patch, partying to destruction in the boom years of the 1920s, thus anticipating the *danse macabre* of Corrine and Russell Calloway in the 1980s. (Their name, of course, recalls Nick Carraway, narrator of *Gatsby*.) Fitzgerald intended *The Beautiful and Damned* as social satire, according to the novel's dust jacket description (which he probably wrote): "It reveals with devastating satire a section of American society which has been recognized as an entity — that wealthy, floating population which throngs the restaurants, cabarets and hotels of our great city."⁵²

However, Fitzgerald's novel is more personal than public; Wolfe and McInerney use private dislocations (infidelity in particular) as corollaries to public corruptions. Though both Wolfe and McInerney show their characters convincingly inhabiting the restaurants, clubs, and hotels of go-go Manhattan, Wolfe tells us more about private dinner parties of the very rich and the city's Dickensian court system, which enmeshes his rich fool, Sherman McCoy. McInerney adequately covers the high-roller social set, but tells us more about insider trading, leveraged buyouts, and publishing empires. Either way, Scott Fitzgerald remains the inspirational model for contemporary chroniclers of the city.

Perhaps the most telling allusion to Fitzgerald appears in the opening page of *Brightness Falls*, when Jeff Pierce, then a patient in a Connecticut retreat for addicts, watches Russell and Corrine, the friends who forced him into rehabilitation, arrive for a visit — like a couple in a magazine ad, so patently members of their generation

and class. Corrine's yellow hair and Russell's yellow tie flying like pennons of bright promise. "Begin with an individual and you'll find you've got nothing but ambiguity and compassion; if you intend violence, stick with the type."⁵³

Jeff feels violence, for he is angry at Russell, his best friend, and Corrine, the woman both men love. By "violence" McNerney suggests his satirical intention to mock such types as the Calloways, yet his considerations of their individual stories yields ambiguity and compassion. Such alternatives frame the rhetorical and sensibility extremes of this novel. The opening line of a Fitzgerald story, "The Rich Boy," establishes McNerney's source: "Begin with an individual, and before you know it you find that you have created a type; begin with a type, and you find that you have created — nothing."⁵⁴ Fitzgerald here suggests the "something" — compassion beneath satire — that is crucial for the best New York City fiction.

Russell and Corrine Calloway, both age thirty-one, were five years married in 1987. Their marriage seemed blessed, "a safe haven in a city that murdered marriages." Russell Calloway first met Corrine Makepeace at Brown. Now they live in a one-bedroom rental on the East Side with a view from their terrace of the city to the south. He works in publishing and she is a stockbroker. Both were caught up in the giddy updraft of expectations in New York in the early 1980s, a mood well captured in McNerney's Fitzgeraldian prose, which combines evocation and irony.

The electronic buzz of fast money hummed beneath the wired streets, affecting all the inhabitants, making some of them crazy with lust and ambition, others angrily impoverished, and making the comfortable majority feel poorer. Late at night, Russell or Corrine would sometimes hear that buzz — in between the sirens and the alarms and the car horns — worrying vaguely, clinging to the very edge of the credit limits on their charge cards.⁵⁵

McNerney sets his exemplary tale in the larger context of the city's history. Wall Street, he notes, marked the northern boundary of New Amsterdam, where a log wall stood in the seventeenth century, a wall over which settlers threw their garbage. Corrine goes to work each morning oblivious to all this, "not really seeing the towering temples to Mammon as she walked toward the one in which she toiled, reading her paper in the available light that found its way to the canyon floor." She thinks the rising Dow Jones crazy. "Castles in the air."⁵⁶ However, Russell, her impetuous and ambitious husband, wants to storm the turrets.

McNerney's plot closes on his characters like an engine of destruction when Russell is inspired to attempt a hostile takeover of Corbin, Dean and Company, the old publishing house for which he works. (Whitney Corbin, Sr., founded Corbin, Dean and Company, modeling the firm after Harry Crosby's Black Sun Press, and Corbin made it, like Crosby's, into a house dedicated to literary modernists. What was built in the commercial and literary idealism of 1920s New York is fittingly shattered in the speculative madness of 1980s New York.) Russell is encouraged in his scheme by Victor Propp, a novelist who exploited the system for ever larger bids for his long-unproduced novel.

I feel that we in this insane city are living in an era in which anything can happen. Do you remember what Nick Carraway said as he was driving into Manhattan in Gatsby's big car and the skyline of the city came into view over the

Queensboro Bridge? As they cross into the city, Nick says, "Anything can happen now that we've slid over this bridge . . . anything at all."⁵⁷

This, then, is the theme of *Brightness Falls*: "anything can happen." Shocking and surprising New York is even a city in which, it is reported, a rogue leopard, panther, or tiger wanders the streets, attacking citizens. A *Post* headline screams: "Wild Cat Terrorizes City."⁵⁸ Near the end of the novel, Corrine, who volunteers at a soup kitchen on the Lower East Side, gets caught up in a police raid on a shantytown ("Reagantown"). "Corrine envisioned the violence spreading and consuming the entire city."⁵⁹ Then she sees the source of the myth — a terrified escaped ocelot stands in an empty lot. In New York City the ocelot is not the only creature under attack.

Trina Cox, a shark in "M & A" (not kinky sex, but mergers and acquisitions), gets involved in Russell's takeover scheme — "Maybe we can rock [and] roll," she tells Russell.⁶⁰ In turn she brings in Bernard Melman, takeover king, a latter-day, vulgarized Gatsby (Melman, too, delights in his leather-bound books, props to his pretensions) who rules businesses and attracts what is left of New York society to his garish parties.

If it had taken a generation for the Rockefellers to gain admittance to the parlors of the Astors, it took only a hundred million or so 1987 dollars for the current crop of financial wizards to purchase a guest list of sterling old names and high-voltage celebrities.⁶¹

The rest of the story is an artfully told inevitability. Corrine has a premonition of disaster: "Lately it seemed to her that the horsemen of the apocalypse were saddling up, that something was coming to rip huge holes in the gaudy stage sets of Ronald McDonald Reaganland."⁶² Russell, however, thinks that the music will never stop. "Partying is such sweet sorrow," Jeff tells Corrine, not realizing the full implications of what he says.⁶³ Inevitably, Jeff overreaches, then the market crashes. His takeover effort is taken out of his hands by Trina Cox and Melman; after Corrine learns of his brief affair with Trina, the Calloway marriage goes bust. All falls down. The center has not held, Jeff realizes, in exile in Los Angeles.

Years before, he'd moved to New York believing himself to be penetrating to the center of the world, and all of the time he lived there the illusion of a center had held: the sense of there always being a door behind which further mysteries were available, a ballroom at the top of the sky from which the irresistible music wafted, a secret power source from which the mad energy of the metropolis emanated. But Los Angeles had no discernible center and was also without edges and corners.⁶⁴

The New York City of *Brightness Falls* is hollow at the center. At one point Jeff and Russell walk along Great Jones Street — they pass an ominous sign reading DANGER HOLLOW SIDEWALK — looking for the bathhouse that they hope is still there. "Buildings disappeared overnight in the city, like black rhinos from the African savanna. In the morning only a smoking pile of brick and mortar would be left, the skin and bones; the next day a Pasta Fasta or a Younique Botique."⁶⁵ Indeed, by the end of the novel the bathhouse is gone, its site converted to another club. Old, established businesses fail, replaced by trendy fly-by-night sex shops; New York is

strip-mined for quick profits at every level. Much more is lost. Jeff, the writer who was convinced, like Fitzgerald before him, of life's insupportable sadness, dies; the Calloways learn much about loss and feel "alone in the world, shivering at the dark threshold" — the final words of the novel.⁶⁶ In New York of the 1980s the lights were dimming. Novelists and commentators had to go back to the 1950s, like Dan Wakefield, or to the 1920s, like Toni Morrison, to discover what President George Bush liked to call "points of light."

Toni Morrison's *Jazz* is set in January 1926 and centered on Lenox Avenue — seven years after the Armistice, when black soldiers, returning from the Great War, proudly marched up Fifth Avenue with great expectations of opportunities in America. Morrison's cautionary plot shows that even at the height of the Harlem Renaissance, disillusionment and black misery were pervasive. The novel's narrative is another engine of urban destruction: Joe Trace — husband, salesman of Cleopatra beauty products — shoots to death Dorcas, his eighteen-year-old lover. Violet, Joe's wife, a hairdresser, attacks Dorcas's corpse at the funeral with a knife. That single act of murder, its causes and its consequences (foreshadowing further violence), consumes the novel.

Alice, Dorcas's aunt, detests "lowdown music" and decides that jazz was the cause both of her family's and of Harlem's miseries. "Alice Manfred had worked hard to privatize her niece, but she was no match for a city seeping music that begged and challenged each and every day. 'Come,' it said. 'Come and do wrong.'"⁶⁷ (Does "privatize," a word drawn from contemporary public policy jargon, not strike a false note when ascribed to a down-home, black woman in the 1920s?) Jazz and the city are one during New York's "jazz age" in *Jazz* — both entice, destroy, inform. This, then, is a novel of verbal improvisation, told by an unnamed voice — seemingly omniscient, but actually limited in awareness, suggesting the tone and qualities of a member of the Harlem community, but with the detachment of an outsider: that is, the voice of a writer, like Morrison — as the narrative moves around in time and the style elaborates figurative language.

"Sth, I know that woman" is the sentence that opens *Jazz*, though the narrator will come to admit all she does not know or understand about the characters whose stories she tells.⁶⁸ (Once again, as in Morrison's *Beloved*, characters are haunted by the presence of a dead girl.) Indeed, the novel is something of a self-consuming, self-referential act, at once evoking the exotic life of postwar Harlem and undermining the authority of its narrator. Certainly the novel constitutes a deconstruction of myths about Harlem and the city, showing the deep human anguishes that lie beneath its surface, pains reflected in the blues and in the violent and passionate acts of its citizens.

This is a novel about the black heart of New York City. The narrator adores but does not fully understand it. "I'm crazy about this city. Daylight slants like a razor cutting the building in half. . . . A city like this one makes me dream tall and feel in on things. Hep." (Thinking she is "hep," the narrator sees black life in the racial cliché imagery of razor cuts.) The narrator mistakenly thinks that in 1926 Harlem residents are happy, that the "sad stuff" is behind them, that "at last, everything's ahead."⁶⁹

The narrator, then, is naive, never more so than when she assures readers that the city can be understood, that it is what it appears to be. "Nobody says it's pretty here; nobody says it's easy either. What is decisive, and if you pay attention to the street

plans, all laid out, the city can't hurt you." Of course she is quite wrong about that; the devious twists and turns of the city, embodied in its jazz — Oliver, Armstrong, Ellington — belie the regularity and reassurances of its street design.

Do what you please in the city, it is there to back and frame you no matter what you do. And what happens on its blocks and lots and side streets is anything the strong can think of and the weak will admire. All you have to do is heed the design — the way it's laid out for you, considerate, mindful of where you want to go and what you might need tomorrow.⁷⁰

Speaking around the back of her unreliable narrator, Morrison wants us to heed another design, more devious and off-rhythmic, the pattern of jazz, which reveals the elusiveness of Harlem's stories. *Jazz*, then, is a parable through which we can better learn our ways around New York, find our way into the lives of American blacks (so often misrepresented, according to Morrison), and discover the truths and distortions of fictional narratives.⁷¹

Violet and Joe first met in Vesper County, Virginia, in 1906. They came to New York, dancing on the train that brought them, seeking a return of the love they felt for the city. "Like a million more they could hardly wait to get there and love it back." The city held the promise of escape from the "specter" of racism, violence, and injustice they left behind. This wave of "country people" came in great numbers and fell in love with the city. "There, in a city, they are not so much new as themselves: their stronger, riskier selves."⁷²

But the city proved no haven from racism, victimization, and disillusionment. In compensation, these characters tried to recapture their youthful elan — most markedly in Joe's affair with Dorcas. When *that* failed, they turned murderous, killing the things they loved. However, the intersecting lives portrayed in *Jazz* do not, as its narrator expects they will, turn into a *Porgy and Bess*-like melodrama of black self-destructiveness through jazz, jealousy, and reprisal.

Instead, Joe, who was never arrested for the murder of Dorcas, and Violet renew their marriage. The narrator shrugs in wonder. "It was loving the city that distracted me and gave me ideas. Made me think I could speak its loud voice and make that sound human. I missed the people altogether." As she did not really understand the circuitous ways of the city and its music, so too did she misjudge Harlem's representative citizens. "So I missed it altogether."⁷³

The novel does not end in the violence that the plot had long been foreshadowing, but it does end in sentimental reassurances. Morrison may underestimate the city's capacity to impose consequences on its citizens' actions, and she may also overestimate the city's capacity for romance!⁷⁴ Or is it only Morrison's narrator who is mystified by New York City? In any case, in *Jazz* the city, like the music, resists quick or easy interpretation.

Contemporary commentators conceive of New York as a city of central importance and epic proportions. For Oliver E. Allen, in *New York, New York*, it was Manhattan—heterogeneous, tolerant, brash, cosmopolitan, materialistic — rather than insular and pietistic Boston, that was the true site in which the nation was conceived in liberty.⁷⁵ Thomas Bender, in *New York Intellect*, agrees, citing Edmund Wilson to support the point that New York is indeed a city of the world: "The New Yorkers . . . are all men

or women of the world in a way that no New Englander is, and they have, most of them, a sense of the country as a whole such as few New Englanders have had." Bender goes on to add his own claims to New York's distinctions:

What is so impressive about New York City — from either a general American or a European perspective — is the battleground quality of its intellectual life. The uncentered but not utterly formless character of intellectual culture in New York is its special, though not always welcome, gift to the life of the mind.⁷⁶

In *The Art of the City*, Peter Conrad calls New York, quite simply, "The Epic City," finding in its literature evidence of the mock epic (Irving's *History of New York*) and true epic (Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*).⁷⁷ More modestly, William R. Taylor, in *In Pursuit of Gotham*, searches out "Gotham," a city of entwined commerce and culture within New York City.⁷⁸ Thus, in the midst of the deterioration of the city, celebrations of its wonders continue.

In *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, Tom Wolfe fittingly satirizes New York in a chapter titled "The Masque of the Red Death," making Poe, that lonely man in the crowd, Manhattan's true prophet of doom. The chapter portrays a posh Upper West Side dinner party composed of old moneyed men who were accompanied by mature women, "starved to perfection," and "so-called Lemon Tarts," or younger women "who were the second, third, and fourth wives or live-in girlfriends . . . men refer to, quite without thinking, as *girls*."⁷⁹ In the midst of this gathering, Lord Buffing, a British poet who is dying of AIDS, tells the assembled guests, the reputed "beautiful people" of Manhattan, of the Poe story about similar partygoers who ended up dancing with Death. "They are bound together, and they whirl about one another, endlessly, particles in a doomed atom — and what else could the Red Death be but some final stimulation, the ne plus ultra. So Poe was kind enough to write the ending for us more than a hundred years ago."⁸⁰ For Tom Wolfe, New York City is the site of a terminal epic, "a doomed atom" in the world's destruction.

What Tom Wolfe does for midtown, Richard Price does for New York's boroughs and outlying satellite cities. In novels (*The Wanderers*, *Bloodbrothers*) and a film (*Sea of Love*) Price has shown the dark side of the half lives of those confined to the Bronx — a violent world baptized in blood loyalties and confirmed in blood letting. In *Bloodbrothers*, young Stony DeCoco, who lives with his family in Co-op City, a horrific high-rise housing project, is in conflict. Will he be able to fly past the nets of family ties by doing what he wants to do (working with hospitalized children) or will he drown in the blood of family expectations (construction work)? As though he were in a gutter morality play, Stony vacillates between conflicting claims: his father and his battered brother draw Stony back to the family while the hospital children and even Three-Fingered Annette, a prostitute, show him a wider world.⁸¹

In *Clockers*, Price's latest fiction, another young man, a black drug dealer named Strike, seeks escape. At the end of the novel he is on a bus, leaving the Port Authority terminal, going he knows not where, saved from early death by the grace of Rocco Klein, a concerned cop. Strike leaves behind a wasteland of burned-out lives vividly described by Price. In this novel Price leaves the Bronx and invents an imaginary city of unquiet desperation: Dempsey, at the New Jersey end of the Holland

Tunnel. Perhaps Price wants to present a concentrated model of the drug-and-police world, a New York City with all cultural amenities removed.

In any case, his characters are drawn from confining Dempsy (a larger Co-op City), through the tunnel, to New York City's fatal attractions and promises of release. One unlucky dealer, shot in Dempsy, dies on the New York/New Jersey line, *in the tunnel!* One day Strike and a boy he is recruiting into the drug business drive into New York. "The trip to New York took only thirty minutes, and as they flew around the glazed fluorescent curves of the Holland Tunnel, a false promise of daylight around each bend" drew them on. On the New York side, Strike takes out his .25 caliber pistol and says, "New York, New York, city of dreams, sometimes it ain't *all* what it seems."⁸²

In another New York scene, Buddha Hat, an assassin, takes Strike to Times Square to show him the pornographic film in which Buddha Hat appeared and lost his virginity. On their way back to Dempsy, after being harassed by Port Authority police outside the tunnel, the two young men pause, on the New Jersey side of the Hudson, "staring out at the shut-down New York skyline," talking about how many years they had left to live and wondering what would be the best spot on their bodies in which to receive a quick fatal shot.⁸³

Rocco, who lives in Manhattan, understands Strike, for the policeman and the drug dealer share the same constricting vision of the city. "Rocco looked out the bedroom window at their nighttime view of the bridges leading into the southern tip of Manhattan. Underlit by the city, the sky was an eerie muddy purple."⁸⁴ When Strike does escape Dempsy and takes the bus out of New York, the reader is surprised, for Price had convincingly portrayed a no-exit world, a New York City with a shut-down, muddy purple skyline that spreads its infections well beyond its borders.

For Dan Wakefield, New York remains a city of wonder — a city of words, romance, transformation — worth re-creating in a felicitous meditation of *temps perdu*, *New York in the Fifties*.

It was a bright, cool evening in Manhattan in late May 1992 when a publication party was held for Wakefield's *New York in the Fifties*. Though it was a Monday evening, Greenwich Village looked relaxed, festive. The young, as ever, strolled in each other's arms. Outdoor cafés along Bleeker Street were populated by colorfully dressed people drinking cappuccinos, reading the *Times*, ogling passersby or practicing various combinations of these passive arts and crafts. To a visitor strolling along crowded sidewalks in the setting sun, Bleeker Street seemed a territory removed from New York's economic, crime, AIDS, and drug crises. That is, the Village, amazingly, looked and felt much as it had in the 1950s.

It seemed to this visitor, back in the Village after decades away, a field of dreams, called up by Wakefield's imagination, a true village far from the dark and dangerous Gotham of popular imagination, though I knew that all that lurked around any corner. Walking past the Village shops and dining in an open-air Italian restaurant, I could understand the full feel of Frederick Jameson's claim that "for Americans at least, the 1950's, so we now sometimes imagine, remain the privileged lost object of desire."⁸⁵ New York in the 1950s, we retrospectively imagine, was safe, open, welcoming, the center of America's expanding postwar economy, media, and arts.⁸⁶

The Wakefield publication party was cohosted by Seymour Lawrence of Houghton Mifflin, the book's publisher, and Art Cooper, editor in chief of *GQ*, who commissioned an essay from Wakefield that grew into the book; Cooper also published two sections of Wakefield's book in his men's fashion magazine. Fittingly, the party was held at the Village Gate. When he opened the Village club in 1958, owner Art Lugoff could not afford the then-fashionable folk musicians, so he made it into a jazz (John Coltrane, Charlie Mingus) and comedy (Woody Allen, Mort Sahl) spot, which Wakefield and his peers frequented, coming over from the White Horse Tavern, their center.

Many of them came back again, some thirty years later — one literary critic and novelist struggled with a cane, another critic arrived in a wheelchair, but on the whole the guests made up a surprisingly agile and prosperous-looking group of smiling, public men and women — to celebrate a book that praised their generation, the so-called Silent Generation of the 1950s. This much-resented designation was refuted by the boisterous talk which ensued that May evening, upstairs at the Gate, while "Fifties jazz," as the invitation put it, was supplied by the David Amram Quintet. (Wakefield, who would turn sixty within days of the party, was presented with a cake and was serenaded with a clarinet solo of "Danny Boy." He in turn presented Cooper and Lawrence with framed collages: images from the 1950s surrounding the cover of his book.)

If the privileged lost object of desire was not recaptured that evening, a good time was had by all. Celebrities — Mia Farrow, Calvin Trillin, Frank Derford, several television personalities — mixed with less-recognizable but clearly well-off veterans of the 1950s. An anachronistic note was supplied by the presence of several tall, stunningly gorgeous young women — figures usually encountered only in magazine fashion layouts — and two even taller, elegantly dressed young men. The young men turned out to be Christian Laettner, the seven-foot star center of the Duke University basketball team, which had beaten Michigan for the NCAA championship in April, and Grant Hill, Duke forward. *GQ*, it was rumored, was using Laettner on its cover; where Laettner went, it seems, came also an assortment of truly "beautiful people," *les girls*, whose only connection with the 1950s was through their parents! *GQ* (Manhattan fashion) and Houghton Mifflin (Boston publishing) combined forces for a truly New York City event: wildly dissimilar people were here brought together in the name of celebration and promotion, a language that everyone attending understood and spoke fluently.

Wakefield's *New York in the Fifties*, published forty years after his initial, solitary encounter with the city in 1952 — fittingly enough, he had also, as a boy, visited the 1939 World's Fair with his parents — is a marvelous rendering of the city, which retains its power to stir imaginations and elicit revelations. Wakefield's remembrance of things past pays tribute to an era — framed by the end of the postwar recovery period and the time of the takeover of American culture by the baby-boom generation — which may well have been the best of times for the city; certainly Wakefield shows it as a time and a place when it was a very heaven to be young. Further, Wakefield articulates many of the central experiences and myths that have given New York its power, for better or worse, as a symbol of national representation and personal transformation. Wakefield's *New York in the Fifties*, then, is the latest, and one of the most eloquent, of a vast number of books, a veritable "great tradition" of letters, on the symbolic implications of the city.

Wakefield's personal map of New York carried him from Columbia University (where he graduated in 1955) to apartments on the Upper West Side, "on to what would be home in Greenwich Village (appropriate antithesis of what the Midwest means by 'home'), until I said goodbye to New York in 1963."⁸⁷ More than a personal memoir, this is a generational biography after the fashion of those written about the 1920s emigrés to Paris and New York by Malcolm Cowley.

As Cowley called his touchstone book *Exile's Return*, Wakefield might well have called his *Internal Emigrés*, for he, too, describes a generation made up of those who left home — many, like him, from the Midwest, but others from other parts of the nation, or even New York City boroughs beyond Manhattan — in order to "'find themselves' in the pulsing heart of the hip new world's hot center, with the ghosts of the recent past as a guide."⁸⁸

A new "family" heritage was shaped from an early generation of writers: Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Millay, Cummings — a lineage bonded in booze, developed in a commitment to literature, and driven by ambition: to *Making It*, as Norman Podhoretz, who left Brooklyn for Manhattan in the 1950s, put it in his memoir. For Wakefield's generation of young men and women from the provinces, psychoanalysis replaced politics — the dream of the golden mountain that enticed Cowley and others — as a means for salvation.

All of this was marked, for Wakefield and his peers, by a feeling of excitement and nervous self-congratulation at making the break from the other America (where lives were boringly "typical" and fatally "average"), the Elsewhere that was not New York in the 1950s.

Our own chosen place of exile from middle America was not Europe but New York, where, like Paris in the twenties, you found your contemporary counterparts — allies, mentors, friends. Our fifties were far more exciting than the typical American experience because we were in New York, where people came to flee the average and find a group of like-minded souls.⁸⁹

Wakefield, self-elected New Yorker, not only can't, but won't go home again — back to Indiana.

Wakefield chronicles another pilgrim's progress to the center of culture, New York City, "the place where everything important happened first, before the rest of the country was ready for it. The books, the plays, and painting, the very ideas that would inform, entertain, and inspire the nation and the world, were created in that single power-packed place . . . In the fifties . . . New York had no real rival for youth who wanted to be at the creative — and creating — center of the American dream."⁹⁰

New York is something of a dream — memory, evocation, inspiration, invention — in Wakefield's book. Wakefield sees all the past in the most romantic and honorific terms possible, glazing memory with desire, in charged prose.

My friends and I who went to the village in the fifties felt the creative tradition of the place as an inspiration. We wanted to tap the power of it, absorb the literary heritage reflected by those dust jackets around the walls of Chumley's, from books written by people who had talked and drunk at the very tables where we now sat. Supposedly Fitzgerald and Hemingway had drunk — or had been drunk — there, and James Joyce was said to have spent several months at a corner table, writing part of *Ulysses*.⁹¹

Such are the myths of New York, merging fact with fancy — Joyce never visited America — into a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Wakefield's evocation of *temps perdu* brings to my mind a very different journey of rediscovery of the city in the anguished passages on New York in Henry James's luminous memoir, based on his 1904 visit to "the terrible town," in *The American Scene*. James had grown up in New York City, near Washington Square, before the Civil War, so the New York he encountered after the turn of the century shocked him, but it also stirred him into passages of powerful description. What once had been a village, with open fields and farm animals, had become, by the time he returned from twenty years in Europe, a metropolis, a "monstrous organism" of power, symbolized by overarching and overbearing towers dedicated to commerce.

Crowned not only with no history, but with no credible possibility of time for history, and consecrated by no uses save the commercial at any cost, they are simply the most piercing notes in that concert of the expensively provisional into which your supreme sense of New York resolves itself.⁹²

In recoil from a New York that had turned horrific, James sought refuge in the old New York of his childhood, "the space between Fourteenth Street and Washington Square," which "should count for 'tone.'" The region is characterized in James's mind by "the lamentable little Arch of Triumph which bestrides these beginnings of Washington Square — lamentable because of its poor and lonely and unsupported and unaffiliated state."⁹³

When the mature James arrived from Europe, he saw New York as monstrous and the Washington Square Arch as pretentious; a half century later the young Wakefield, arriving from the Middle West, saw New York as romantic and the Washington Square Arch as awesome. Wakefield uses George Washington's address to his troops, words carved into the arch, as an epigraph for *New York in the Fifties*: "Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair. The event is in the hands of God."⁹⁴

For Wakefield the young men and women who came to Greenwich Village were a new model army, not advancing the cause of Christ or country, but affirming a standard of art and culture. Back where they had come from no one was "really interested in trying to find out the answer to questions like 'What is the sound of one hand clapping?' If asked, they'd probably tell you nothing at all. To us, it was everything."⁹⁵ Of course, there is *no* sound to one hand clapping, for it is a contradiction in terms, so any "sound" has to be heard, so to speak, in the mind's ear or the heart's desire. Pilgrims, it seems, quest to New York as though it were Canterbury, and affirm a world of mind over matter, faith over fact. New York, city of steel and concrete, is also a fantasmagoric city of dreams.

For Wakefield, New York was and still remains just such a holy city, though much of his experience, centering around sex (much talk, sporadic action) and alcohol (particularly at the White Horse Tavern), had a distinctly profane side. Decades after he left New York, Wakefield wrote a book that testified to his own religious search, *Returning: A Spiritual Journey*, but even in the 1950s he showed signs of looking for more than instant gratifications and career advantages. *The Catholic Worker*, a newspaper begun by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933, which sold for a penny, drew Wakefield into becoming "a sort of idealistic fellow traveler," because it

offered “a spirit, a purpose, a way of transcending self — through service that those who came [to New York in the 1950s] still vividly remember.”⁹⁶ One way or another, New York drew new life out of these young men and women from the provinces.

For Henry James, New York was a grasping and greedy hand, symbolized by a massive new building which, he discovered, loomed over the house in which he was born in Washington Place. The building “blocks, at the right moment of its own success, the view of the past,” so that “the effect for me, in Washington Place, was of having been amputated of half of my history.”⁹⁷ The region symbolized a lost ideal (familial, pastoral) for James; for Wakefield, the same region would stand for a discovered idealism and a missionary faith in the future. New York, truly a city of wonder, is, then, a protean, multifaceted emblem that gives the impressionable viewers back just what they bring to it, whatever their points of origin or routes of entry.

One man’s Eden is another man’s Hades in New York. James’s felicitous “old New York” existed in the 1840s and was centered around “the good easy Square, known in childhood, and as if the light were yellower there for the small accident, bristled with reminders as vague as they were sweet,” but was discoverable in 1904 only in a determined act of memory.⁹⁸

For Edith Wharton, the “age of innocence,” a world of “faint implications and pale delicacies,” occurred during the 1870s and was recalled with some regret at its passing after the Great War in *The Age of Innocence*.⁹⁹

For Jan Morris, New York reached its apogee in the spring of 1945, when soldiers who had fought in Europe began to return. Looking back more than forty years later, in *Manhattan ’45*, Morris saw in the postwar city “a late epitome of a more youthful America,” a city which “still worshiped gods . . . a good and merry place.” Then, inevitably, all changed utterly. “Out of the delights of 1945 another city had emerged.” The United Nations building replaced the slaughterhouses along the East River and New York became something of “a world capital,” ceasing to be a “Wonder City,” thus losing some of its pride. “New Yorkers no longer claimed that in Manhattan anything was possible, boasted about feeding Europe’s poor with civic garbage, or even walked down Fifth Avenue with quite the boxer’s truculence of Tom Buchanan.”¹⁰⁰ Perhaps not, but just then, just when Jan Morris declared “old New York” to be dead and gone, there walked onto the city’s street scene the wide-eyed pilgrims of the 1950s so-called Silent Generation, ready to re-create their own sense of Manhattan as a moveable feast.

New York, then, is a constantly re-created image of felicity which, in time, inevitably turns sour until it is converted into a dreamscape — a pleasing remembrance of things past. Young men and women from the heartland come in wonder, remain in jaded awareness, and leave in disillusionment, only to be replaced by new now-voyagers who are ready to embark on the great adventure of the city — only to return in memory and desire forty years later to celebrate *temps perdu*, as Wakefield so convincingly does in *New York in the Fifties*.

It is difficult these days to find occasions to praise the city — to come up with more than two cheers for New York City — even when it burnishes a jewel in its cultural crown. Take Bryant Park as an example. Bryant Park, located behind the Public Library, on Forty-second Street, was designed under the direction of Robert Moses in 1934; it was built on a podium, several steps above the street, and it was cut off from

the city by hedges and walls. As a result, in recent years its isolation made it a central site for drug exchanges: it became "Needle Park." Bryant Park's extraordinary restoration in 1992 was the result of a five-year effort of businessmen, foundations, artists, neighborhood companies, and city officials, supported by city and private money, to take back the park from the citizens of the night and return it to all the citizens of the city. "Bryant Park is good for New York. What's good for New York is good for America!" declared *New York Times* columnist A. M. Rosenthal.¹⁰¹

The Bryant Park restoration was inspired by the urban theories of William H. Whyte. In *City: Rediscovering the Center*, Whyte argues that cities have been abandoning their streets — "the river of the life of the city, the place where we come together, the pathway to the center" — in a process of decentralization and suburbanization. Whyte affirms his faith in center city life. "I think the center is going to hold."¹⁰²

As Paul Goldenberger notes, Whyte's commitment to the revitalization of center cities and his belief that access was preferable to separation, served as the basis for the redesigned Bryant Park, which is now open to the street in more places and is no longer separated by hedges and walls. Whyte, says Goldenberger, understood that the problem of Bryant Park was its perception as an enclosure cut off from the city; he knew that, paradoxically, people feel safer when not cut off from the city, and that they feel safer in the kind of public space they think they have some control over. For all that, Goldenberger senses in his response to the new Bryant Park a distance from his usual set of associations surrounding New York.

Why is it that whenever a moment of genuine joy appears in the physical fabric of New York, the first impulse is to think you must be somewhere else? Are we so used to the notion of New York as harsh, dirty and dangerous — which it so often is — that when we encounter something pleasant, we think not of how good this part of New York is but of how it makes us feel transported to a different place? It says much about our sensibilities toward the city in the gloomy 90s that Bryant Park, in many ways the quintessential New York urban park, now feels like part of another city altogether.¹⁰³

For Goldenberger, New York called up such bleak associations that the manifest evidence of excellence embodied in Bryant Park made it seem to exist in a world elsewhere, not on Forty-second Street, at the heart of the actual city. For the architectural critic of *The New York Times*, the center has not held.

Americans have come to fear their cities. In the fall of 1990 *Time* magazine ran a headline, "The Rotting of the Big Apple," and displayed on its cover lurid images of sex and violence — the city as film *noir*. What once had been, in Lewis Mumford's words, "a symbol of the possible" had become in the American mind a center of destruction. "Reason: a surge of drugs and violent crime that government officials seem utterly unable to combat."¹⁰⁴ Evidence overwhelms: the Central Park rape, the Utah tennis fan shot to death on a midtown subway platform, the murder of a young black man in Bensonhurst, and the daily carnage of violence and death throughout the city. "To really get the full flavor of the city's daily allotment of burglary, robbery, assault, rape, arson, murder, you have to peruse with patience section B of the *New York Times*," suggests Alfred Kazin.¹⁰⁵ There, reports of bias attacks proliferate.

Children on their way to school are abducted and raped — in at least one instance by a man with the AIDS virus. Students are even shot *in school!*

February 27, 1992: "Two teen-agers were shot dead at point-blank range in the hallway of a Brooklyn high school yesterday morning, little more than an hour before Mayor David N. Dinkins was to visit the troubled school to tell students they had the power to break free of the world of violence and drugs." The killings took place at Thomas Jefferson High School. Apparently a fifteen-year-old shot and killed a seventeen-year-old and a sixteen-year-old with a .38 caliber pistol, as the result of a feud that reached back to arrests after a 1990 robbery. "The killings came just three months after another student was cut down by gunfire and a teacher critically wounded in the same East New York high school, a brick structure whose immaculate pink halls contrast with the near-desolate landscape of project housing and empty, litter-strewn lots."¹⁰⁶ In addition, it goes without saying, drug shootings are ordinary, barely news.

In an October 1991 editorial, *The New York Times* identified "defeatism" as one of New York City's major problems. "New Yorkers are losing heart," it granted, ridden by poverty, dirt, crime, drugs, and bleak prospects. The Times called for renewed commitment and faith in the city. "New York's ills are common to many American cities but its strengths are unrivaled. New York will come back."¹⁰⁷ Thus the problem is identified as a crisis of faith on the possibilities of American life. As New York goes, so goes the nation.

What is in danger of being lost is not only our collective faith in the city, which once held out such promise to so many of the world's "wretched refuse," in Emma Lazarus's lines inscribed on the Statue of Liberty, but a capacity to believe in a redemptive future. "The hatred of cities is the fear of freedom," writes Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*. "The fear is contagious, and as larger numbers of people come to perceive the city as a barren waste, the more profitable their disillusion becomes to dealers in guns and to political factions that would destroy not only New York and Chicago but also the idea of the city."¹⁰⁸

It is just *that*, the diminishing idea of the city as a place of promise and freedom, which lies between the lines of the various works that describe contemporary New York City. ❧

Notes

1. Lewis Mumford, "What Is a City?" in *The Lewis Mumford Reader*, ed. Donald L. Miller (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 104; Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1938), 3-10.
2. Lewis Mumford, "East Side, West Side," in *Mumford Reader*, 18-23; Lewis Mumford, *Sketches from Life: The Autobiography of Lewis Mumford: The Early Years* (New York: Dial Press, 1982), 3-10.
3. Lewis Mumford, "All Around the Town," *Mumford Reader*, 20; *Sketches*, 13-24.
4. Eric Pooley, "Air Dinkins: Avoiding an L.A. Meltdown, the Mayor Catches a Break," *New York*, May 25, 1992, 32-35. Up to April 1992, Dinkins, writes Pooley, had had

an extraordinary run of bad luck — a summer 1990 street-crime wave culminating in the subway murder of Utah tourist Brian Watkins; an endless recession robbing the city of 357,000 private-sector jobs in three years and spiraling social-service costs; the federal

government's departure from urban America. It was a climate that called for allocating losses — not an easy task for a mayor who came into office promising to allocate services to the poor. Fiorello La Guardia might have had trouble looking good.

5. William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming," in *W. B. Yeats Selected Poetry*, ed. A. Norman Jeffares (London: Macmillan London, 1974), 99-100.
6. Catherine S. Manegold, "A Grim Wasteland: New York by TV: Crime and More Crime," *The New York Times*, June 14, 1992, 41.
7. So notes Steven J. Kumble, in a letter to *The New York Times* dated May 26, 1992.

A summer visitor to our city, a first-time tourist, a delegate to the Democratic National Convention or someone considering opening an office in New York all have as a first impression a series of conditions characteristic of a city overwhelmed by the problems of urban decay — a city out of control.
8. Jolie Solomon, "Quayle on New York: 'Dangerous . . . Dying,'" *The Boston Globe*, June 16, 1992, 1, 22.
9. Todd S. Purdum, "Quayle Attacks New York as Home of Liberal Failure," *The New York Times*, June 16, 1992, A-22.
10. David Ansen, "A Gotham Gothic," *Newsweek*, June 22, 1992.
11. Andy Logan, "Around City Hall: The Perfect Place," *The New Yorker*, July 20, 1992, 77.
12. Dan Wakefield, *New York in the Fifties* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992).
13. John Dos Passos, *The Best Times: An Informal Memoir* (New York: New American Library, 1966), 127-160.
14. A model of the New York book is the tour. In *Subway Lives: 24 Hours in the Life of the New York City Subway* (New York: Crown, 1992), Jim Dwyer, a *New York Newsday* reporter, notes that every day more than three million people travel on the New York subway's seven hundred miles of track in some six thousand cars. His series of sketches of subway riders ranges from the violent (the teens who burned alive two clerks in a token booth in 1979) to the bizarre (the rider who announced he was from Mars and would play his trumpet until he collected enough money to return). Calvin Sims, "In Short," *The New York Times Book Review*, January 5, 1992, 18.
15. Nik Cohn, *The Heart of the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 12.
16. William Schneider, "The Suburban Century Begins," *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1992, 33-39, 42-44.
17. Anna Quindlen, "Public and Private: The Old Block," *The New York Times*, May 17, 1992, sec. 4, 17.
18. Bernie Bookbinder, *City of the World* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989), epigraph.
19. The 1990 census shows a boom-and-bust cycle in New York City in the 1980s. "By almost every measure, from falling dropout and poverty rates to increases in income, life in New York City and its environs improved during the last, heady decade, marked by conspicuous consumption and economic growth." However, what was gained has now been lost. Since the census was taken, "economists and planners say, virtually all of the 80's job growth in New York City and in the state has been wiped out." Josh Barbanel, "Census Data Shows Boom Before Bust," *The New York Times*, April 16, 1991, B-4. A study, based on data from a house-to-house survey by the Bureau of the Census, conducted by the Community Service Society, an advocacy group for the poor, "concludes that one in four of the city's residents had incomes in 1990 that fell below the Federal Government's poverty threshold, more than at any time during the previous decade." Poverty rates, predictably, were highest among Hispanics and blacks; however, surprisingly, poverty rates nearly doubled for whites between 1979 and 1990. Forty percent of the city's children, the report shows, lived in poverty — double the national average. Thomas J. Lueck, "25% of New Yorkers Living in Poverty, Report Asserts," *The New York Times*, June 10, 1992, B-3.

20. Bookbinder, *City of the World*, 176.
21. "Excerpts from State of City: 'Voices of Our People,'" *The New York Times*, January 3, 1992, B-2.
22. Martin Gottlieb, "Bushwick, Recalling '77, Kept Its Cool This Time," *The New York Times*, May 10, 1992, Metro section, 36.
23. Tom Wolfe, *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1987), 229.
24. Ibid., dust jacket copy.
25. Jay McInerney, *Brightness Falls* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 8.
26. Jason Epstein, "The Tragical History of New York," *The New York Review of Books*, April 9, 1992, 45-52.
27. Alfred Kazin, text, and David Finn, photographs, *Our New York: A Personal Vision in Words and Photographs* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 15.
28. Ibid., 19.
29. *Mumford Reader*, 13.
30. Sarah Bartlett, "Beyond Just Complaining: Self-fulfilling Pessimism Is Said to Infect New York," *The New York Times*, December 27, 1991, B-1-B-2.
31. Allen Ginsberg, "I Love Old Whitman So," *The Massachusetts Review* 33, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 77.
32. "Walt," in "The Talk of the Town," *The New Yorker*, April 13, 1992, 28-30.
33. Walt Whitman, "America," in *Walt Whitman: Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (New York: Library of America, 1982), 616.
34. "Walt," 30.
35. Elizabeth Hardwick, "Boston: The Lost Ideal," in *Contemporary American Essays*, ed. Maureen Howard (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 253.
36. Elizabeth Hardwick, "New York City: Crash Course," in *The Best American Essays 1991*, ed. Joyce Carol Oates (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1991), 96.
37. Elizabeth Hardwick, Foreword to Mary McCarthy, *Intellectual Memoirs: New York 1936-1938* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992).
38. Mary McCarthy, *The Group* (New York: New American Library, 1964), 7.
39. McCarthy, *Intellectual Memoirs*, 62.
40. Ibid., 101.
41. Ibid., 114.
42. Joan Didion, "New York: Sentimental Journeys," *The New York Review of Books*, January 17, 1991, 45-58. This essay is in Joan Didion, *After Henry* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 253-319.
43. Joan Didion, "Goodbye to All That," in *Slouching Toward Bethlehem* (New York: Dell, 1968), 225-238.
44. Wakefield, *New York in the Fifties*, 21.
45. Ibid., 339.
46. From John Winthrop's "A Model of Christian Charity" to Robert Lowell's "For the Union Dead," Boston writers have judged Boston by its abilities to live up to its own high standards. Shaun O'Connell, *Imagining Boston: A Literary Landscape* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990).
47. In such a country, to talk of posterity is a little like a wet blanket — heavy, boring and cold. Which is how Boston seems, many days, from New York. But it can also seem quite otherwise, a bracing vision of a city that knows what it's about — the well-being of our collective

posterity. In such a city, a sense of place disciplines the sense of property, the past and the future are privileged on a par with the present; and, a bit too bracing for comfort, conversation turns on less voluptuous issues than appetite, envy and the rights of consumers.

The latter are the more worldly concerns of New York City, in the eyes of Nelson W. Aldrich, Jr., who moved from Boston to New York City. Nelson W. Aldrich, Jr., "Notes of a Native Son: Alas, Cold Roast Boston Has Little Wriggle Room," *The Boston Sunday Globe*, March 22, 1992, 68–69.

48. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 1891–1892 ed., in *Walt Whitman: Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (New York: Library of America, 1982), 210.
49. Herman Melville, "The House-top," in *Herman Melville*, ed. R. W. B. Lewis (New York: Dell, 1962), 324–325.
50. Robert Phillips, Introduction to Susan Edminston and Linda D. Cirino, *Literary New York: A History and Guide* (U.S.A.: Peregrine Smith Books, 1991), i–xxxi.
51. McInerney, *Brightness Falls*, 412–413.
52. Arthur Mizener, *The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 152.
53. McInerney, *Brightness Falls*, 3.
54. F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Rich Boy," in Malcolm Cowley, ed., *The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 77.
55. McInerney, *Brightness Falls*, 8.
56. *Ibid.*, 41–42.
57. *Ibid.*, 79.
58. *Ibid.*, 104.
59. *Ibid.*, 398.
60. *Ibid.*, 150.
61. *Ibid.*, 163.
62. *Ibid.*, 66.
63. *Ibid.*, 36.
64. *Ibid.*, 389.
65. *Ibid.*, 225.
66. *Ibid.*, 416.
67. Toni Morrison, *Jazz* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 67.
68. *Ibid.*, 3.
69. *Ibid.*, 7.
70. *Ibid.*, 8–9.
71. In *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), Morrison attacks the racist literary establishment and its canon. She indicts other American novelists for their failures of imagination in portraying black experience — though *Jazz* contains apologies for her own failures.
72. Morrison, *Jazz*, 32–33.
73. *Ibid.*, 220.
74. Ann Hurlbert argues that Morrison in *Jazz* is engaged in "what looks like the ultimate mission of self-sabotage: she is questioning a black writer's efforts to penetrate the heart of a black world." "Romance and Race," *The New Republic*, May 18, 1992, 44.

75. Oliver E. Allen, *New York, New York* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), 2.
76. Thomas Bender, *New York Intellect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), epigraph, xvi.
77. Peter Conrad, *The Art of the City: Views and Versions of New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 3–21.
78. William R. Taylor, *In Pursuit of Gotham: Culture and Commerce in New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).
79. Wolfe, *Bonfire*, 333.
80. *Ibid.*, 356.
81. Richard Price, *Bloodbrothers* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976).
82. Richard Price, *Clockers* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), 198–199.
83. *Ibid.*, 369.
84. *Ibid.*, 456.
85. Daphne Merkin, "Name That Decade," *The New York Times*, May 24, 1992, Styles section, 4.
86. The best novelists of the 1950s reflect little serenity and security in the lives of young Americans. See John Updike's *Rabbit, Run* (1960), Philip Roth's *Goodbye Columbus* (1959) and *Letting Go* (1962); Joyce Carol Oates redefined the 1950s as an era of anxiety over the Bomb, sex, and personal freedom, particularly for women, in *You Must Remember This* (1987).
87. Wakefield, *New York in the Fifties*, 4–5.
88. *Ibid.*, 6.
89. *Ibid.*, 7.
90. *Ibid.*, 20.
91. *Ibid.*, 122.
92. Henry James, *The American Scene* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968 [1907]), 72–77.
93. *Ibid.*, 88–91.
94. Wakefield, *New York in the Fifties*, epigraph.
95. *Ibid.*, 126.
96. *Ibid.*, 77.
97. James, *The American Scene*, 91.
98. *Ibid.*, 4.
99. Edith Wharton, *The Age of Innocence* (New York: Macmillan, 1968 [1920]), 19.
100. Jan Morris, *Manhattan '45* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 269–271.
101. A. M. Rosenthal, "Tale of One City," *The New York Times*, April 24, 1992, A-35.
102. William H. Whyte, *City: Rediscovering the Center* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 7.
103. Paul Goldenberger, "Bryant Park, An Out-of-Town Experience," *The New York Times*, May 3, 1992, 34.
104. Joelle Attinger, "The Decline of New York," *Time*, September 17, 1990, 36–38.
105. Kazin and Finn, *Our New York*, 200.
106. Allison Mitchell, "2 Teen-Agers Shot to Death in a Brooklyn School," *The New York Times*, February 27, 1992, A-1–A-2.

107. "Climbing Back: New York City's First Hurdle: Defeatism," editorial, *The New York Times*, October 13, 1991, 14.
108. Lewis H. Lapham, "Fear of Freedom," *The New York Times*, June 6, 1992, 23.

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